

POETIC TRIFLES.

IN TRIVHS.

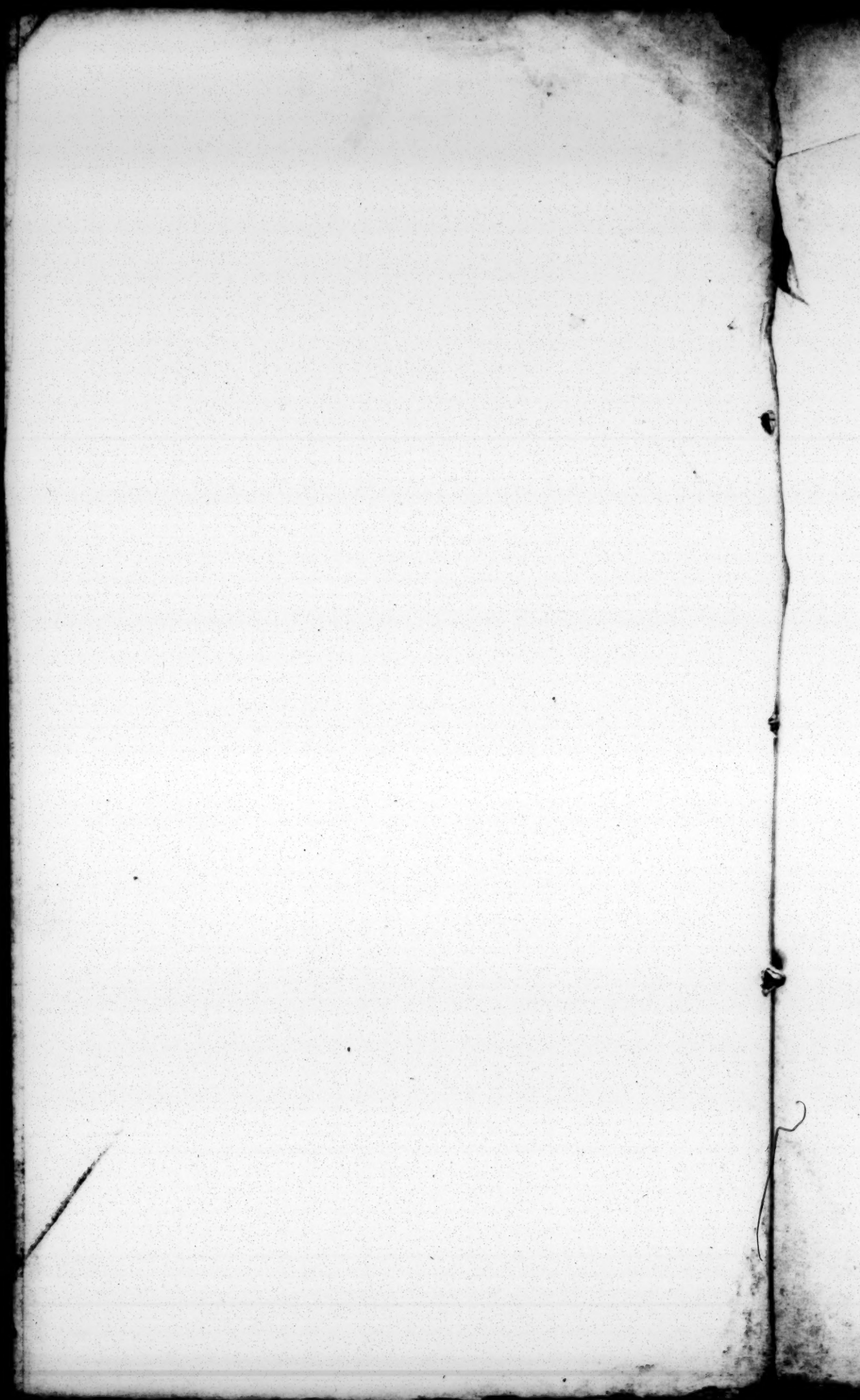
VIRGIL.



LONDON:

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1796.



LYRIC

AND

ELEGIAC PIECES.



LYRIC AND ELEGIAC PIECES.

ODE TO THE IZALSALYA.*

I.

TO savage war while Europe rang,
Mid sinking Rome the trump's shrill clang
Inspir'd the Vandal's rage :
Lo Gaul, the flag of death unfurl'd,
Shapes her pale course o'er half the world :
See the Czar's mighty throne, firm-bas'd for
many an age.

* My readers well remember Mr. Bruce's description of the *Zimb*, or *Izalsalya*, which Isaiah mentions as inhabiting "the uttermost parts of the rivers of Ægypt," and as "the bee, that is in the land of Assyria." This insect is still terrible to those and the neighbouring countries : and, from Isaiah's days to the period of Mr. Bruce's travels, there have passed at least 2,500 years.

II.

Yet e'en an insect bears dismay
 And famine, where it wings its way,
 More dreadful than an host !
 And its dominion hath surpass'd
 Man's widest empire—doom'd to last
 Thro' a long lapse of years no human sceptres
 boast !

III.

Yes ! “ when the Lord shall hiss for thee,
 “ Fly of Assyria ” — “ for the bee
 “ That in the rocks doth rest ; ”
 The plains shall tremble at the sound,
 The shivering woods remurmur round,
 The cities, still with fear, pause at the dire
 behest.

IV.

Fell Izalsalŷa ! Tho' amaze
 Thro' India's groves behold the blaze
 Which agitates the night ;
 Yet the * fulgora, as it fires
 The extensive forest-gloom, inspires
 No terror such as marks thy pestilential
 flight.

* Or firefly.

V.

V.

What tho' the angel of the north
 Hath pour'd an insect * myriad forth,
 Fair Europe's form to blast,
 While, shrouding deep the sun's red ball,
 A heavy darkness hung o'er all ;
 Yet from thy power alone faint nature shrinks
 aghast.

VI.

O thou, whose livid wings of gauze,
 While pointed bristles arm thy jaws,
 Are mid thy myriads spread ;
 Strait, at their rattling, as the car
 Heard from the mountain-tops afar,
 The frenzied herds snort round, and fly thy
 † horselike head.

VII.

Appal'd, the fierce rhinoceros stands,
 And vainly notes the distant sands,
 Then hails his tawny foe :
 In union, by the water's edge,
 They urge their way, thro' matted sedge,
 And roll their bulky limbs, where brooks
 the fen o'erflow.

* The grylus migratorius.

† The head of the Izalsal'ya resembles that of a horse.

VIII.

Lo, chill'd by thee, Melinda's race,
And Saba's change their custom'd place,
And all the nations move
Before thee, gathering in affright,
And, wing'd from Abyssinia's height,
Down the long-streaming Nile, to other re-
gions rove.

IX.

For thee, the wild-descending hail
Whirl'd thro' the sulphur'd thunder pale
The furrows smote in vain ;
For thee the ambassador of God
O'er shuddering Egypt stretch'd the red,
And bade thee darken round, and desolate
the plain.

X.

'Twas thus the Almighty's dread design,
No waste of arms should rival thine,
Since wars on earth began :
'Twas thus the Almighty's will, thy sway,
Enduring still, tho' crowns decay,
Should mock imperial pomp, and shame the
pride of man.

A SWISS

A SWISS SCENE.

I.

WHERE long, long vallies of eternal ice,
 Within the hollows of the mountain gleam;
 And, glaz'd with frost, the shaggy precipice
 Hangs o'er the dashing of the torrent-stream
 That spreads its foam, then far beneath the beam
 Of the pale sun, deep frets its cavern'd way;
 Here the Swiss woos his pine-woods, tho'
 they seem
 To darken their brown foliage, and display
 Their cones, in sullen pomp, to the dim-
 struggling day.

II.

Here, if a wanderer, as array'd in light
 Sudden a glaciere meets his charmed eyes,
 Muse on the congelation, glittering bright,
 Or tinctur'd with the rainbow's transient dyes;
 Sudden, the surges of the vapour rise
 O'er all the illumin'd landskape's beauteous
 glow:
 And, shivering 'mid the horror of the skies,
 He marks immeasurable tracts of snow,
 Shook by the wrathful roar of clouds that
 burst below.

III.

And see the lonely traveller's weary feet
Pursue his path along the mountain's side :
His burning cheeks are pierc'd by arrowy sleet,
Slow as he climbs where ruins threaten wide.
But lo ! his smoking cot at length descry'd,
He fondly pictures the parental kiss,
Quickening his eager pace—when strait divide
The snows in hollow thunder !—scarce the
abyss
He 'scapes, once more to taste the dear do-
mestic bliss !

IV.

Yet the Swiss loves his chasmy-fractur'd steep ;
Yet loves his dusky woods, tho' cold and drear,
And the rough roads that round his mountain
sweep :
Yet, as the sombrous torrents soothe his ear,
Wild-hanging o'er the craggy point, how dear
His simple hut ! 'Tis there he breasts the gale,
Furrowing his fields ; nor, 'mid his genial cheer,
Heeds, tho' high floods the mountain-base assail,
The enormous mass of snow that overwhelms
the vale.

A SCOTCH

A SCOTCH SCENE.

I.

THE breath of Zephyr scarcely stirs
 The impervious gloom of yonder firs :
 White points of shiver'd rock emerge
 From the still darkness, at the verge
 Of evening's smooth empurpled lake :
 But hark ! what sounds the woodland shake ?
 The rush of eagle wings ! Behold,
 She cleaves yon westering cloud of gold,
 Mounts the dim azure of the sky,
 And soars to daze the straining eye.
 Yet, sudden as the lightning-glare,
 She plunges down the depth of air,
 Wheels dizzily around, and drops
 At distance, 'mid the dusky copse.

II.

Now on a crag I see her perch,
 And pierce the glen with keener search.
 I view her tawny plumes, her beak,
 Her talons, that their fury wreak

Oft

10 LYRIC AND ELEGIAC PIECES.

Oft on the fawn, or friendless hare ;
I mark her hov'ring in mid air !
Some animal that shrinks dismay'd
Amid the thickets of the glade,
She threatens with an instant blow—
See, see, she pounces on a roe ;
And, screaming, bears it thro' the wood,
To feast her ravenous young with blood,
Where on rock-ledges rudely pil'd,
She sternly fram'd her eyrie wild !

DUNHEVED:

DUNHEVED: AN ODE;

WRITTEN ON A TOUR THROUGH CORNWALL, IN 1794;

THE FRENCH THREATENING AN INVASION.

I.

THE beamless sun went down the sky,
And, sinking as a ball of blood,
Ting'd with a deep funereal dye,
Thro' sullen mists, the murky wood.

II.

Across Dunheved's frowning steep,
By fits, the pale moon flings a ray;
When sudden round its ruins sweep
The clouds that veil'd the dying day.

III.

Lo, where the castle windows roar
To the wild murmurs of the blast,
Lightening their ivy-curtains hoar,
Mid the dim air a spectre past—

IV.

Dunheved's genius!—He appears
Featur'd with woe. "Here, here," (he cries)
As his gigantic form he rears,
"My adamantine helmet lies.

V.

V.

“ Here, buried round the charmed casque,
“ Behold my mailed warriors sleep !
“ ’Twas theirs, where toil and valour ask
“ The martial arm, renown to reap.

VI.

“ Where hosts assailing, aim’d the blow,
“ Their swords they hasten’d to embrace :
“ Alas ! while scowls the insulting foe,
“ Why lingers now the Cornish race ?

THE ANCIENT AND MODERN PATRIOT
CONTRASTED, 1795.

SAY, while the menaces of ruffian France
Mingled with execrations, o'er the surge
Come wafted, as invading hosts advance ;
Shall patriots, with an air of triumph urge
The cause of miscreants, pointing to the verge
Of fate, where *Albion* they condemn to sink ?
What prowess could have bade old Greece
emerge
From death, or Rome escape perdition's brink,
If patriots for her foes had fram'd the brother-
link ?

Ardent, in elder times, the Patriot wrench'd
From fell sedition's fangs, the mangled laws,
And cities with the blood of traitours drench'd,
And shook his helmet-plumage to applause !
Thus Sparta's heroes, bold in freedom's cause,
Exulted to the flashing of the spear :
Thus Curtius plung'd into the gulphy jaws
Of death : nor less to Roman valour dear,
The Decii's noble fires delight the ingenuous
car.

Still

Still was the midnight camp. To dye the dust
 Ere morn, with torrents of the Latian blood,
 Great Decius lay—when sudden, more august
 Than human, a majestic spectre stood,
 And thus, in hollow accents—“ Tho’ a flood
 Of vulgar gore the hostile fields distain,
 Still gath’ring horrors o’er thy country
 brood !

Unless a gasping leader bite the plain,
 Vain were the lifted sword, the warrior frenzy
 vain.”

The hero heard ; and calm, himself fore-doom’d
 The victim : and, tho’ haunted silence hush’d
 The world, no terrors o’er his spirit gloom’d :
 But, as the murky shades yet linger’d, flusht
 With fires that lighten’d thro’ his soul, he
 rush’d

Into the field of fight. His godlike force
 Markt with dismay, and thick battalions
 crusht

Beneath the bath’d hoofs of his foaming horse,
 Amid pale shrinking foes, he fell a mighty
 corse !

By

By the same fires impell'd, in battling strife,
 The son, too, courted the renown of death;
 Nor less the grandson, prodigal of life,
 Dar'd, at the trumpet's blast, his blade un-
 sheathe,
 And snatch, from grateful Rome, the en-
 sanguin'd wreath
 Of glory. Thro' the ranks amazement ran :
 Tho' thousands, urg'd by fate, resign'd their
 breath,
 Yet, as each Patriot flam'd amidst the van,
 His country tower'd with pride, and hail'd
 him more than man.

Say, then, what traits the *British* Patriot mark?
 How are the virtues of *his* bosom known ?
 He smothers up his feelings, frowning dark—
 Feelings, a dastard wretch, he dreads to own ;
 And tells of brooding ills, in sullen tone !
 But if his country some dire loss alarm,
 He vaunts the insulting smile when others
 groan ;
 And, were his valu'd self secure from harm,
 Would grasp the traitorous steel, and boast the
 assassin's arm !

THE

THE DISTREST COTTAGE.

THE horse-shoe at the wicket, to protect
The cot from mumbling witch; the sanded
floor,

The hearth with kettle wrapt in turfy blaze;
The board of goodly oak, by frequent brush
Worn smooth; and ditties quaint, to grace the
wall,

Ditties set off by pictures, where grim ghosts
Stalk in vermilion—such were pleasing once:
Yet more delightful was the smiling groupe
Of ruddy boys, and girls in russet clad,
Whom I have mark'd, as thrifty Dinah cook'd
Their evening meal, expecting the fond sire—
But *Anna* chief, now scarcely in her teens,
Her bosom panting high, her glowing cheek
Sunbrown, and mellow as the catharine pear!

Yes! I have mark'd the little blooming
groupe

Hailing with smiles their sire; as now reliev'd
From labour, he to Harry's eager glance
Display'd the sable chough, whose legs and bill
Boast

Boast a bright saffron, or for scampering Dick
Brought home the lark's brown eggs, full soon
to join

The pale-blue sparrow's, in long order strung;
Or now, on Sunday-clothes, and *Henry's* geer
Bran-new but the last Sabbath, archly pros'd;
While, as he look'd askance, the damsel hung
Her head, as droops the rosebud wet with rain:
And, as its freshen'd leaves, the rain o'erpast,
She rais'd her eye! But ah! the rosebud oft,
Snapt by a sudden hail-shower, fades and dies!

Her *Henry* was untrue. A maid, whose veins
Thro' her pellucid skin soft azure gleam'd,
Had snar'd him by her more seducing charms.
'Twas from the curate's lips aloud proclaim'd
The dire intelligence that stamp'd him false,
Poor *Anna* heard; while her dim'd eye no more
Trac'd, in her secret pew the page that soothes
With rites mysterious, the fond virgin sigh!
Now in her cot, bereft of hope, she pines;
While, as her little sisters, full of talk,
Sport at her knees, they point the inviting
broth,

C

And

18 LYRIC AND ELEGIAC PIECES.

And wonder why, enrich'd with marygold
And the green leek, its savoury steams are
vain!

Poor prattlers! they are strangers yet to love.

THE

THE HALCYONS.

LO, where the gentle halcyons plume
 Their azure wings amid the gloom
 That, breaking, rolls far east away,
 And gives the glistening surge to day.
 Behold the wrathful foam subside,
 And soft airs curl the rippling tide;
 While, tranquil as the waters flow,
 They mock the mirror's lucid glow.
 And as the wave, now vex'd no more,
 Glides, amorous on, to kiss the shore,
 I see upon its heaving breast,
 Sweet birds! your little genial nest:
 Thus, when the storms of ether cease,
 They leave us love, as well as peace.

THE BANISHED POET.

SINE ME, LIBER, IBIS IN URBEM!

I.

TO tuneful Ovid, exil'd from his home
 Thy sweetest numbers, elegy, we owe—
 Those strains that soften'd his severer doom;
 As fancy, to relieve the eye of woe,
 Spread o'er his retrospect a vivid glow.
 Yet, in his lonely walks, he wont to mourn!
 "Ah my poor book (he cries) thou—thou
 wilt go,
 "Without thy master, to the city borne,
 "Unconscious of thy fate, while here I rove
 forlorn."

II.

'Tis thus, far banisht from the chosen few
 Whose converse once could lull my cares to
 rest,
 Whose friendship brought elysium to my
 view—
 The harmony that links in love the blest;
 Here, in this solitude I sooth my breast
 With traces fervid from the muse's pen:
 Yet, by the weight of dire ennui oppress,
 Tho' my songs "flutter thro' the mouths of
 men,"
 I hear nor praise, nor blame amid the silent glen.

POETIC

POETIC TWILIGHT,

WHILE in sweet warbled notes the red-
breasts sing
To eve's pale shadow, and on solemn wing
The grey owl sails along, the fading face
Of nature wears a melancholy grace.
But lo, on yonder streamlet's dimwood banks,
Sudden the fairies rise in fiery ranks,
And, glancing to the moon, their circlets link;
Then, fainting from the eye of fancy, sink
Into the dusky dell. And now cold fear
Sees the deep-labouring cloud its burthen bear
Down chasmed crags, as from the moorland far
Whistles the gale;—when, quenching the soft
star
Of Hesper, in slow rounds fell wizards turn,
And bid to mutter'd spells the drugs of magic
burn.

ELIZA'S URN.

HERE, while her parents o'er the pensive urn
 Pay the last honours to the shade they mourn;
 I trace the young Eliza, as she flew
 From a false world, whose arts she never knew.
 But what avails the sweetly-warbled strain,
 Where fairy fancy, musically-vain,
 Tinctures the pale urn with the morning ray,
 Or the still blush of dim-declining day;
 While round its pedestal soft florets glow,
 And breathe ambrosial incense as they blow?
 Say, will the eye of sorrow smile serene,
 As fiction rears the visionary scene?
 No—to relieve the friend's afflicted breast,
 Point the pure spirit in the realms of rest;
 And tell him, vanish'd ev'ry earthly care,
 His kindred soul shall meet Eliza there!

MONODY

*MONODY ON THE AUTHOR'S VISITING
HIS PATERNAL SEAT.*

SALVE SANCTE PARENS! ANIMÆQUE UMBRÆQUE
PATERNÆ!

I.

YE groves, whose ivy-curtain'd trees
Embower'd my infant years;
Ere care had charg'd with sighs the breeze,
Or grief shed bitter tears!
Ye lov'd paternal landscapes, hail,
The thyme-sprent hill, the fescued dale,
The pathway gleaming thro' the glade,
Where once wide open'd to the light
Yon mantled pool, a mirror bright
Beside the chesnut shade.

II.

Yet there the little gurgling rill
Its pebbly channel shows;
To speak the master's fortune still,
An emblem as it flows.
And round the briar-grown islet rise
Hoar aspens that uplift in sighs
Their leaves, to soothe my pilgrim ear!
Ah happy scenes, where light and gay
My childish steps were wont to stray—
Ah scenes to fancy dear!

III.

Yes! ye are dear, if local charm
 Can touch the pensive heart;
 Where, once in duteous ardour warm,
 Our fond connexions part!
 While filial piety and love
 Have power the beating breast to move,
 While pale regret delights to mourn;
 The vestal tear shall oft bedew
 My cheek, as memory brings to view
 A parent's holy urn.

IV.

When my soul hovers o'er the past,
 His anxious care I see——
 His love, that, long as life can last,
 Shall still be trac'd in me.
 He gave to innocence and truth
 The unfolding blooms of early youth;
 And by his own pure model taught,
 That 'tis in virtue to bestow
 Such tranquil pleasure as the glow
 Of rubies never bought.

V.

V.

Alas ! in these familiar fields
 Can sad remembrance fade,
 When every spot some relic yields ;
 Some lesson every shade ?
 Beneath yon limes, whose letter'd bark
 The names of schoolboy friendship mark,
 He pointed my aspiring views ;
 And cherish'd, where fantastic gleam
 The beech-roots thro' the crisped stream
 My young ingenuous muse.

VI.

But cold those lips, and ashy-pale ;
 And, fainting from my view,
 The colours of the vernal vale
 Are cold in fancy, too !
 Yet here, before my tranced eyes,
 Of other days the visions rise,
 And, as ascending from the tomb,
 The phantoms of my fathers glide,
 Re-visiting, in stoled pride,
 The white-moss-glimmering gloom.

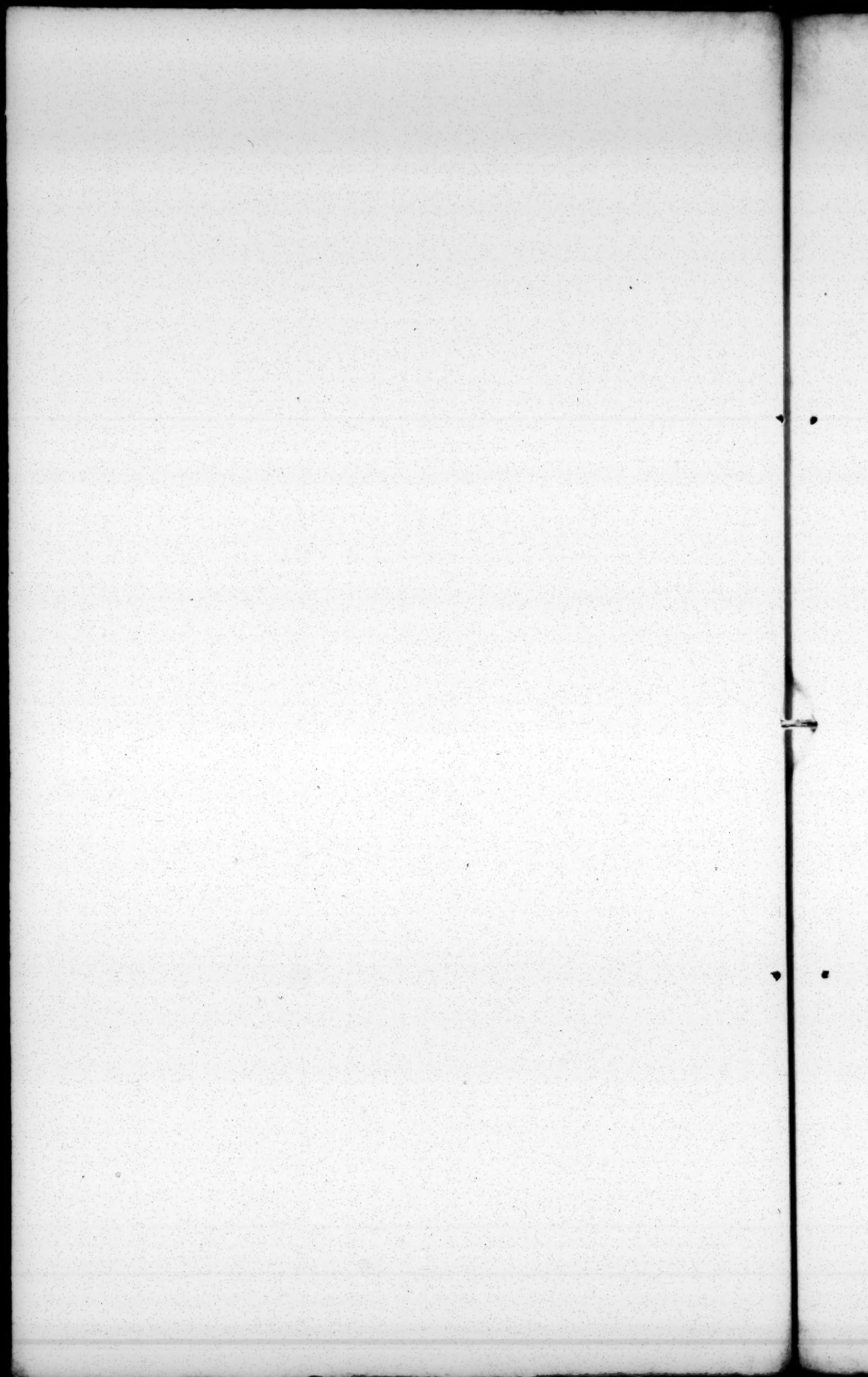
VII.

VII.

But go, ye vain illusions, go!—
 Romantic shapes that lure
 To where ambition leads to woe,
 To woe ye cannot cure.
 Haply, from life's sequester'd way
 My humbler wish, untaught to stray,
 May guide me to some lone retreat—
 How blest if Heaven my evening close
 Gild with the radiance of repose
 In thee, paternal seat!

SKETCHES,

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SKETCHES

IN

VERSE,

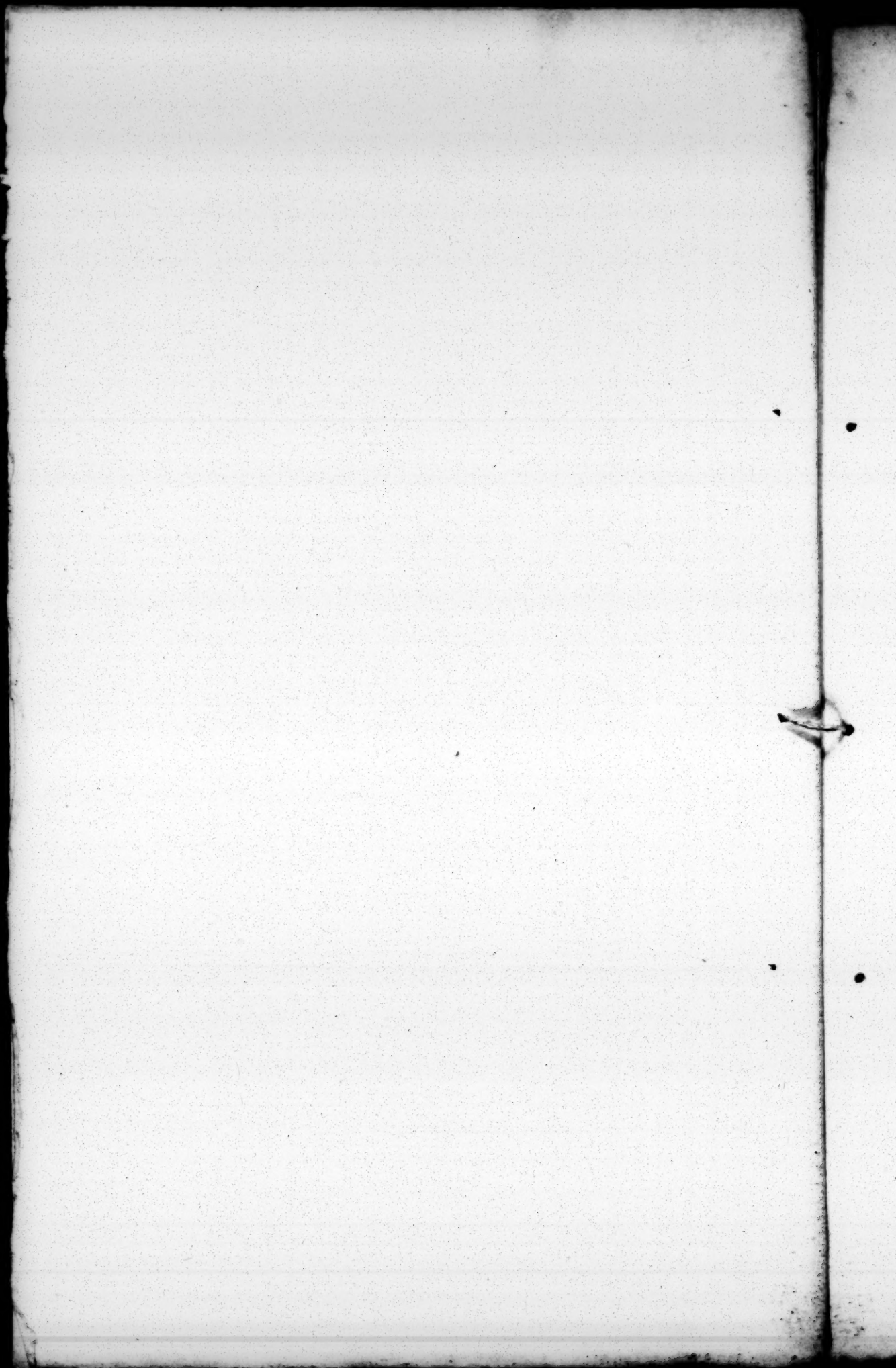
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PROSE ILLUSTRATIONS.

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1796.



SKETCHES,

Ec. Ec.

ODE,

ADDRESS TO THE

PRINCE OF WALES,

ON HIS INTENDED MARRIAGE WITH THE
PRINCESS OF BRUNSWICK.

December 11th, 1794.

WHILE Anarchy uprears her form
Gigantic in the martial storm,
And strides across the groaning plain
Where War hath heap'd his hills of slain,
Or (as she speeds the work of Death
Amid the city's lurid air)
Wafts wide, O Pestilence, thy breath,
Exulting in the venom'd gasp;
And, Famine! sinews thy fell grasp;
To the pale nations while with ghastly glare
She fires the sanguine eye, and lifts the bristling hair;

SKETCHES.

II.

Still happy Albion, tho' her shore
Shake to the naval battle's roar,
Opes the green bosom of her isle
To meet, O Harmony, thy smile!
And tho' to military pride
Unfurl'd, her standard shade our coasts,
In vales where sparkling currents glide
Benignant Plenty pours her horn,
And Health as vivid as the morn
Amid the inspiring breeze his ardor boasts,
And Freedom roves secure, nor dreads assailing hosts!

III.

No more the fiend-arrested foe
Heeds the gay-clustering vineyard's glow :
No more the village-dales of France
Give echoes to her airy dance.
No more her nobles bid the dome
Resound with music's festal note.
Alas ! in desolated gloom
Portentous Ruin loads the ground ;
Tho' erst the embattled palace frown'd
Shadowing with massy towers its ancient moat :
Alas ! o'er sedgey lawns the unchannel'd waters float!

IV.

Yet Albion, at the cottage-green,
Beholds, as erst, the quiet scene ;
Still views the hereditary farm
With each domestic blessing warm ;
Surveys the extensive granary fill'd
As in old time with Autumn's store,
While the same grounds his grandfire till'd
The yeoman's busy care repay :
Still sees the scutcheon'd hall display
The heraldic honors, as when chiefs of yore
Listen'd, in spousal state, to the rich minstrel lore.

V.

Say, while each work that bore the rust
Of age, lies crumbled into dust,
In other climes, where, whelming all,
The war-fiend seems to crush the ball;
Say, by what magic power we hold
Tenures our fires were proud to own
Still unpolluted as of old ?
Is it, that time hath render'd dear
The boon we cherish and revere ?
We look not to this sacred source alone,
But to the filial love, which guards a George's throne!

VI.

When we behold the regal rays,
That brighten to a sun-like blaze,
From the domestic circle spring
And in the parent mark the king ;
Shall not affection, fond to trace
The virtues of our fire, avail,
To fix on yet untrembling base,
The pillars of the sovereign dome ?
And if it's wonted beams illumine
The palace, shall the castle-splendor fail,
Or shall the hamlet sink, and cease to cheer the dale ?

VII.

The cares that watch thy weal, O PRINCE,
A nation's loyal love evince—
That love which, linkt to harmony,
Heaven hath, perhaps, reserv'd for thee!
Yes! if the rose-inwoven bower
To spotless Hymen rear'd, refine
Thy soul in the connubial hour;
And if thy pure parental fire
Beyond the private walk aspire,
And in thy zeal for Britain's glory shine;
Then shall those ardent vows that bless thy fire, be thine.

VIII.

Yes! if the hypocphantic crew
Tremble thy footsteps to pursue,
Diffusing far the taint of vice
Where Riot glories to entice
The unweeting bosom to its snare;
If thou, with manly soul, dismiss
The extravagance, whose gaudy glare
The fool divine effulgence deems;
If, waken'd from the feverish dreams
Of love, thou spurn the sensual bliss,
Behold! thy garment's hem a grateful kingdom kifs.

IX.

Bright in the charms of vernal youth
 A Brunswick claims thy manly truth.
 Not in the hues of Folly gay,
 Or vagrant Diffipation's ray,
 She comes from no degenerate court,
 Where native dignity commands
 Each sister-grace, their lov'd resort;
 Where no imperious fashion haunts
 Its cheerless victims as it flaunts
 The ephemeral vesture, but in social bands
 The blue-ey'd pleasures meet, and join their willing hands.

X.

As yon bark skims the distant seas,
Impatience hovers on the breeze.
The murmurs of the wave subside,
And soft airs curl the rippling tide !
The dim sail whitens on the sight !
Around the gilded vessel dance
Colours, that stream a rainbow light !
I see the veiling umbrage shade
The blushes of the *bridal maid* !
And the Loves fluttering as the sails advance,
O'er her ambrosial form their purple pinions glance.

XI.

The choral brilliance bursting round,
 Her modest eye that meets the ground,
 Seems sparkling to the crimson cheek,
 Where her soft flaxen tresses break !
 Sudden the unfolding portals blaze,
 While millions hail their prince's choice.
 Amid the universal gaze,
 Amid the popular acclaim
 That seems to stamp each hallow'd name
 With images of fadeless worth, "rejoice!"
 Yet "tremble!"—and attend a heaven-directed voice.

XII.

The voice I hear—or seem to hear ;
Breath'd in soft tones it meets my ear——
“ Go, happy pair” (a spirit cries,
The Power that rules o'er British skies)
“ Go, where the nuptial planet blends
“ Its lustre with the Georgian star,
“ And to the couch of Hymen lends
“ The chasten'd influence, which alone
“ Loofens, uncheckt, the virgin zone ;
“ While, gliding on the bosom of the air,
“ Love wreathes with evening-flowers his dew-besprinkled
car.

XIII.

" Go, copy those perfections bright
" Which give to crowns untarnisht light—
" Be this your first, your proudest aim ;
" For such is virtue, such is fame !
" So shall the British race transcribe
" Your fair examples not in vain ;
" While, as they scorn the venal tribe,
" And crush the democratic band
" Who hurl around the burning brand,
" They bid the throne its pristine pomp retain,
" And Albion, in her Howes, still sway the extensive
main."

HIGHLAND ODE.

I.

ERE *Arven* vanish'd from my eyes,
And left my widow'd soul to sighs,
How sweet, where summer breezes blow,
To trace the heath-flower's gradual glow,
Lift the grey linnet's song, or mark
Half-hid in clouds, the mounting lark,
Or wander, where the lucid rill
Tinkles beside the pine-crown'd hill,
Or, deep within the forest, start
Mid interwisted boughs the hart,
Or hail, with my old hunting-horn,
The echoes of the merry morn,
Then seek the hall, where plenty dwells,
And share, at eve, the feast of shells!

II.

But *Arven's* feet, with gentle print,

Gave to the tender flower its tint :

• Soon as its matin song was heard

My *Arven* plum'd the foaring bird :

She bade the prattling streamlet flow,

Or with pleas'd eye purfu'd the doe :

Her image only render'd dear

The wildwood chace, the festal cheer !

Alas ! when mild as morning breaks,

I view'd the blushes on her cheeks,

When heav'd her snowy breast, more fair

In contrast with her raven hair,

She seem'd all nature to absorb

In the pure brightness of her orb.

III.

And once, when o'er the thiftly wafte
Murmur'd the melancholy blaft,
When from the dark-red thunder broke
The flame that rent the towering oak,
When fpectres clad in fable fhrouds,
Gleam'd from the chambers of the clouds;
When flow, along the midnight heath,
Mov'd the prophetic pomp of death;
When helmets, hung in darkfome rows,
Shook to the moon, their ftately brows;
'Twas then I deem'd fome danger near,
And own'd my bofom chill'd with fear;
For, as I faw her pallid hue,
Her fhuddering frame, I trembled too!

IV.

Yet now the lightning's shaft may fly;
And ghosts may beckon from on high.
Tho' others quiver as the leaf;
I fear not—I am full of grief!
The pale procession big with fate,
I heed not the funereal state!
Others may shrink in lonely halls,
From casques that sigh along the walls;
Unterrified I sit alone,
And catch the lifted vizor's groan!
'Tis only at my *Arven's* tomb
I see condens'd the gather'd gloom:
Yet, as I drink the charnel air,
I weep, but cannot tremble there!

ÆGYPTIAN ODE.

WHERE bosom-thrilling transports glow,
We oft observe the intruder Woe!—

See tufted Faioum breathe delight
From rose-trees kindling on the sight,
From orange-blooms, or tamarind-bowers,
Or the pomegranate's scarlet flowers,
And loftier palms, that wave between
Their foliage of a deeper green,
Relieving the bright azure skies
Where scarce a rainy vapour flies ;
While thro' the fragrance as it blows
A stream of liquid amber flows,

While nestles many a gurgling dove
Within the bosom of the grove,
And from the shade on fable wings
With crimson strip'd—the flamen springs,
And the plum'd ostrich on the sands,
Or pelican majestic stands.

To cool the sun's meridian beams,
There fruits refreshing kiss the streams,
Or blushing to eve's purple ray
Amid the breezy verdure play—
As its leaves shade each silver sluice
The pulpy water-melon's juice,
To eager thirst delicious balm ;
And sugary dates that crown the palm.

Yet from the rocks that skirt the wood,
Fell tigers bound, to thirst on blood ;

Yet the wide-water'd landscapes smile,
Where lurks the treacherous crocodile;
And, ere the melting fruit we grasp,
Death-doom'd, we feel the envenom'd asp.

Then hail my Albion's hoary coast,
Where, tho' no scenes Elysium boast,
We court not temperate joys in vain,
Nor thrill'd by blifs, nor stung by pain.

ARABIAN ODE.

I.

WHERE the wild ostrich, 'mid the sands
 Reigns her eggs to fostering day ;
And camels, to the sabred bands
 Obedient, track their fiery way ;
An Arab wont to breathe his sighs,
To all the blasting winds that rise.

II.

Now to the east where op'd his tent
 Fast by a gushing brook's cool side,
His garment in despair he rent,
 And to the unpitying desert cried :
Then, his eyes fasten'd to the ground,
His legs he cross'd, in grief profound.

III.

“ Ah, why, proud fair-one, flight my love ?

Why were thy black eyes, large and soft

As any gazelle's of the grove ?

Why have I call'd thine eyebrows, oft,

Two ebon bows, so finely archt,

If thus I waste away, love-parcht ?

IV.

Why thus thine eyelashes unfold

Darken'd with such a fable hue ?

Why tincture thy smooth nails with gold,

Or stain thy parting lips with blue,

If thou condemn me still to pine,

Nor with thy fighings answer mine ?

V.

How my heart flutters, as I cast
On thy two heaving breasts, a glance—
Thy two pomegranates—or thy waist
More straight and supple than a lance ;
Or mark, amid the starry night,
Thy steps, as the young filley's light.

VI.

And ah ! thy words as honey sweet—
Alas ! they are not sweet to me !
Oft as I chance thy form to meet,
Some token of my woes I see !"
Thus mourn'd he Love's consuming power—
His frame its shadow yields no more.

O D E.

"THE LILAC-SHADED SEAT."

I.

WHEN the cool evening dew
Refresh me weary from the sultry day,
Amid yon hazel-boughs I wind my way
To seek the glimmering cottage, where my Muse
First breath'd the melting lay.
Gods! how my pulses beat,
As I approach the lilac-shaded seat,
Where, in a sudden transport, to my breast
My Mary's bosom panting-wild, I press!

Ah! this was the first interview of love!
 Then to her cheek the crimson rush'd;
 And both, tho' of a crime unconscious, blush'd!
 Then we both trembled as the leaves above
 Light-twinkled to the breeze that fann'd the grove!
 No more with such ingenuous ardor flush'd
 Amid those gloomy woodlands shall I rove!

II.

Yes! they are gloomy woodlands! but avaunt
 The wounded lover's plaint
 That bids the rose of pleasure faint!
 Hail, hail, delicious haunt,
 Where last, her glances meeting mine, I play'd
 With the luxuriant tresses of her hair
 Whose amber seem'd to gild the air;
 While gazing still on the voluptuous maid

Who now half-smother'd me with sighs,
I drank delirium from her swimming eyes ;
While, printing on her lips the burning kifs,
I bit the swelling rubies, stung
With agonies of blifs !
'Twas then, as with a dying murmur, rung
My deaf'ned ears in storms of passion hurl'd,
Till ecstacy shut out the world !

O D E

TO A

RED-BREAST.

SWEET bird, whose melting lay
Deceives the wintry day,
Come to my cot, while now the orient beams!
O'er hills of purpled snow
See faint the radiance glow,
And fleeting shadows brush yon iced streams.

Approach, devoid of fear;
No cruel heart is here:
On thee shall Pity lift her glistening eye—
Amid yon leafless grove,
Dejected dost thou rove,
And shiver with a solitary sigh?

O fly the dreary shade,
Which fatal snares invade—
There, there the truant school-boy bends his way :
No sympathy he feels,
But death around him deals,
Wild as the hawk that pounces on his prey.

Yes—tho' the morning rife
O'er azure-vaulted skies,
With a pale lustre shines the frosty sun :
For thee my cheerful fire
Shall genial warmth inspire ;
Here lurks no springe, nor roars the murderous gun.

My hospitable board
Shall grateful food afford—
Lo, cold and hunger at a distance dwell—

Then listen to my strain,
Come, peck this scatter'd grain,
These dainty crumbs, nor dread my sylvan cell.

What time, to greet the year,
As vernal blooms appear,
Thy brother warblers wake their choral lays—
Go, pour thy little throat,
Go, mix thy tender note
With each sweet song of tributary praise!

L I N E S

ON THE

DEATH OF A YOUNG LADY.

Feb. 13, 1780.

YE Fair, who flirt in life's fantastic round,
Come, where a scene the face of anguish wears;
And, as the death-bell flings a fullen sound,
Be yours the precious luxury of tears.

Come, gentle spirits, tho' your bosoms heave
With wild emotions, bid not sorrow sleep;
To you, her lovely children, Nature gave
'The heart to pity, and the eye to weep.

What tho' ye taste the dear deluding joy,
As each gay vision gilds the midnight hour;
O let not Fancy labour to destroy
In many an idle dream, Reflection's power.

Full soon to weave the mazes of the dance,
 To join with vacant mirth the festal roar,
 To flutter thro' the regions of romance
 In many an idle dream, shall charm no more.

Yes! she is gone. Lo, there she rests her head,
 Pale as the spectre that appals the glooms :
 Behold the shrivell'd features of the dead !
 'Tis but to fade the rose of beauty blooms.

Ye Virgins, she was fairer far than you—
 Fair as the Poet's pencil can pourtray :
 And from those eyes, now quencht by Death's cold dew,
 Pure native sense effus'd the vivid ray.

But a superior charm to Truth she ow'd,
 Unpractis'd in the mimicries of Art :
 Hers was the sweet simplicity that glow'd
 With all the quick expression of the heart.

Oft shall the scenes that mark'd her life arise,
And from her *Henry* steal a trembling tear,
As Memory paints her faded form in sighs—
Delicious sighs to Love and Fancy dear!

Yet, why *Amanda*, shall Affection grieve
For thee, tho' hurried from our view by Fate,
Thee, whom a happier mansion shall receive,
And whom no perishable joys await.

Go then, dear shade, where kindred spirits rest,
Go from a vale of darkness to the skies—
Go then, where He in whom thy soul is blest,
Shall wipe all tears for ever from thine eyes!

THE
T H U N D E R.

June 8, 1795.

FAR in the dim south-east, a thin white cloud
Drawn out and spreading like a curtain, veils
The untinted morn. And o'er that duskier creek
Fring'd with dun coppice, lo the Thunder seems
To brood incumbent. See he slowly lifts
Above the horizon his red bristling locks,
While many a livid speck of sulphur swells
Around him, as he rears his giant form.
Lo, at the extremity of heaven, he heaps
Cloud upon cloud, like rock high pil'd on rock,
Solid and vast. And now, while overhead
The pale blue sky is streakt with a dense line
Of white, he pauses, as if unresolv'd
Or to roll on his wrath, or to suspend

Awhile, the terrors of his threatening arm.
Yet, as he breathes a suffocating blast
Thro' the still air, we gasp, as where the eye
Of Syroc, fires the sands of Afric's waste.
'Tis noon. And hark ! the squally wind comes on,
Rushing amain : I hear it like the sound
Of hostile spirit shouting ; as enrag'd
He rises, to confront his furly foe,
Then sinks in leaden slumber. From the north
Again the rude gale whistles, till at length
He slopes his dread artillery west away,
Yet muttering vengeance. Yes ! while now the sun,
That pale and flickering had by fits appear'd,
Sinks like a ball of blood, methinks, he growls
Waiting his prey. I see, I see him grasp
The lurid orb, and rend it from heaven's vault,
And quench it, as in everlasting gloom.

TO
A CAMBRIDGE PROFESSOR,

MUCH GIVEN TO

P U N N I N G.

HAIL high Profeffor! to thee gracious Heaven
An envied empire over Puns hath given!

Tho' oft divine aftronomy may call
Thy glaffes to defcry the radiant ball,
Thy active genius by no rules confin'd
Still leaves the planets to the plodding mind;
Eager alone the race of Wit to run,
And panting for the glorious goal—a Pun!

Let fouls mechanic wind thro' fudy's maze,
And for dark fcience barter dearer eafe:

A brighter course thy fervent spirit runs—
Sense, wisdom, learning, what are ye—to Puns?

What tho' the little wits, to fame unknown,
Raise the loud laugh, or pour the deepening groan:
What tho' around the sapient sneer be spread,
And critic darts assail thy reverend head;
Yet have I seen thee taste the thrilling bliss
Of self-applause, amid the general hiss,
And each mean wretch with scornful eye regard,
Assur'd, that merit is its own reward!

So, when appears the solemn bird of night,
At noontide labouring thro' a blaze of light;
Sudden, around the warblers of the day,
Insulting, on their airy pinions play;
Now here, now there, in wanton circles fly:
And a shrill clamour echoes thro' the sky.

But he, unruffled, plies his wings along,
Nor heeds the malice of the chattering throng;
O'erlooks, or eyes askance each giddy fowl,
Plum'd in the conscious merit of an owl! *

* These lines were afterwards transferred to a Country **MERCER**,
equally as fond of a *Pun* as our **CAMBRIDGE-PROFESSOR**.

HAIL, happy **TOM**, to whom indulgent Heaven
To rule o'er Puns and Tape, alike, hath given!
What tho' condemn'd to guide the flippant yard,
Thy Brussels lace unwinding from its card,
Thy genius sports, by measure unconfin'd,
And greatly scorns the poor mechanic mind!
Still, as thy yard proceeds, I see thee spurn
The dust beneath, on tiptoe at each turn;
While girls confess in many a laughing fit,
What's lack'd in measure, is made up—in wit!

THE
PILCHARD - SEINE:

A FRAGMENT.

WRITTEN ON A TOUR THROUGH CORNWALL, IN 1794.

SEE, to the surface of the sea they rise,
Colouring the tremulous wave with ruddy beams.
Now from the boats deep-laden, at the beach,
Are pour'd forth myriads of the glittering race
In many a mountain-heap—What numerous lives
Struggle and faint, then melt into thin air!
Pure spirits that, commingled with the skies,
No mortal sense assail. Alas! not so
Their grosser bodies; that, ere long, attack
The nerve olfactory with noisome stench,
Such as the cunning Reynard ne'er effus'd
The bloody pack to annoy. Anon, a crowd

Of boisterous females, ruder far than those
Yclept of Billingsgate, snuff up with glee
The savoury blessing. Lo, the cellar-gates
Flung open to receive the prize, they part
From the fat-bellied the more puny fry :
Kindly manure, to enrich the flaty land.
Others, meantime, in curious order, place
'The silver rows ; scattering with hands profuse,
'Those nitrous particles by which the world
Exists, unputrified. Rank above rank,
The scales arise, in regular array,
Till the pile, deep and well-compacted, mount
E'en to the cellar-roofs, a mighty bulk.
There for awhile it rests. But say, O Muse,
Who lov'st to lead thy votary o'er the hills
Of Manathon, whence many a winding creek
Fring'd with luxuriant coppice, whence the sea's
Green bosom he surveys—or bid'st, perchance,

The nearer landscape his fond eye transfus'd
To the soft verdure of its elmy dales,
To its neat hamlets perch'd on crags aloft,
To its trim orchards, to its clustering hops,
Or to its ragged oaks, whose pale crests moan
The western gale—Say, Muse, who court'st the airs
Breath'd from the tender myrtle bower, that marks
Each little garden fast by tinkling rill;
Say, how canst thou depict, on palet meet,
The pilchard process, from which Hottentots
Might shrink disdainful?—To pull down the pile
That erst so regular arose, to wash
The scaled salt from every tasteful fish,
To fill the unheaded barrels with the fry,
To range the saturated casks, to set
On each its weight enormous, and to urge
The groaning press till floods of oil descend,
And copious, down the pebbled channel roll;

Such is the task of beings that scarce claim
The name of human, toiling amidst filth
Pestiferous, and by ardent draughts sustain'd.

Sicken'd by these effluvia, I return
To where Condurra shall with other steams
Ere long salute my nostrils—steams, exhal'd
From fruits ambrosial—racy apples crisp,
Such as exhilarate my frame, and give
My glowing Muse to aim at loftier themes.

L I N E S

WRITTEN AT W—— LODGE IN DEVON, IN 1794.

W HERE, in the liveliest green array'd,
The tall trees sport with light and shade,
Amid the groves of W—— Lodge
Trudges secure the jocund Hodge;
And, as he chaunts his rude love tale,
No fears the villager affail.

E'en tho' a slumbering hare he wakes,
His frame with no wild tremor shakes.

But, if his erring footsteps range
Along the gloomy walks of G——

Whereat, oppressing nature, bids
 Her yews shoot up in pyramids,
 Or cuts them into cones and squares—
 Heaven guard him from the holy hares.*

* Not that the squire of G—— has, like the Author of the Task, any lively sense of feeling for the poor animal. It is for the sake of the sport that he interdicts the molestation of his hares. Other sportsmen have congenial sentiments with himself. And with these characters the conquest of a little inoffensive creature is the ultimate pleasure of the chase. This, some philosophers argue, is inconsistent with human nature. The invigorating exercise that accompanies the chase, is certainly (say they) the actuating principle. And the necessity (they add) of supplying the table with food, is another leading motive. But philosophers, who derive their knowledge from books, argue from what human nature *should be*, rather than from what *it is*. Whoever has observed the perseverance with which our modern gentry pursue the flying hare, in spite of every disadvantage of country, and the triumphant exultations which are heard on every side when the wearied helpless animal falls a prey to his pursuers, will easily perceive that neither health nor appetite are motives for the chase; but that the actuating principle which impels our countrymen to the field is merely the cowardly satisfaction of seeing a poor little brown animal wearied and pleading for mercy, torn in pieces by the ravenous jaws of twenty couple of red and white animals which pursue him. And that man is received with every mark of triumph, who is nearest the defenceless creature when he falls, and feasts his eyes with the tortures of the mangled victim!

To meet bold Pufs in yonder path,
Were worfe than to commit a rape!
For well the farmer mutter'd—" Fath,
" 'Tis maifter's girl that takes the shape
" Of Pufs fo squat above the ditch!
" Off, off, 'tis maifter's little witch!"

THE
V I L L A G E.

SUNDAY-EVE.

May, 1794.

W HERE, on the burnisht panes, beneath thy tower,
O Manathon! mild evening flings its rays,
Behold a thoughtless progeny, let loose
From catechetic lecture, quick pursue
The rolling circle, tho' they look behind
With tremulous apprehension as they run,
Or, at each murmur of the poplar-breeze,
Shrink back in silence from the imagin'd form
Of their stern parson, who might strait unlock
That engine which, in durance vile, detains
The culprit, closing on the imprison'd legs.

But see a graver tribe pace down the hill;
And, where thick hollies shade the lane, survey
That fallow-visag'd girl upon the arm
Of her white-trowser'd paramour repose—
Alas! the pale chlorosis hath consum'd
Her cherry cheek. Meantime, amid the groupe
Of cottages, yon whiten'd walls allure
The eye of passenger, but chief the glare
Of gaudy anchor, too attractive sign!
There shall the loitering rustic hail the dusk,
Heedless of home. And say, within those huts
Clustering around, is there one little nook
That wears a Sabbath aspect—such as, erst,
The simple fathers of the hamlet lov'd?
Perchance, some antique crone, green-spectacled,
May bend her dim eye o'er the unclasped book,
Then stir the brightening embers, and then conn
The holy text, till twilight. But, perchance,

One only such yet lingers ; to recount
 With boding sighs her tale of other days,
 Frail relic of primeval piety !
 So, on a Sabbath, fets the village-eve !

EXTEMPORE LINES

TO

MISS W——

ON HER VINDICATION OF GRAY'S ODE TO SPRING,
AGAINST THE CHARGE OF OBSCURITY.

To vindicate a Poet's strain
When female accents flow ;
With fullen wrinkles frowns in vain
The hypercritic brow.
'Tis thus thy bright ideas check
The asperfer's weak essay ;
While, gentle pleader, not a speck
Obscures the page of Gray.
Yet spare the task : to grace thy bard
The tuneful ode rehearse—
Thy liquid voice alone, sweet W—— !
Gives clearness to his verse !

L I N E S

TO

MISS T—

WITH A PRESENT OF A VOLUME OF POEMS.

Feb. 1, 1792.

O Mary, take, nor coldly slight
This tribute of esteem :
Think not sincerity, like mine,
An airy-woven dream.
Tho' William share the enamour'd hour,
Your heart shall not refuse,
One little moment, to regard
A true devoted Muse.
So shall that faithful Muse, ere long,
The spousal numbers chaunt—
And O! be every blessing yours,
That Love, that Heaven can grant!

E

My faltering tongue essays to add
Still something to the store :
But vainly language would express,
Or Friendship with you more.

THE
WISHFUL SWAIN,
OF
DEVON.

WHILE Autumn choak'd with leaves the rill,
Colin, within a shady combe,
Had shap'd his mow, beneath the hill,
And kept the merry harvest-home ;
And of its * bitter-sweets had strip'd
His orchard for the groaning pound ;
When with the first clear juice that drip'd
He hied away, and Sally found.
“ Sally (says he) dear maiden, sip !”
She frown'd : he tried again to speak—
“ 'Tis sweet as honey to the lip !”
He look'd as if his heart would break.

* The sweet apple, called the *bitter-sweet*, is more common in the orchards of Devon, than acid fruit, or the *rough-four*.

And then he fought the dark-green lane

Whose willows mourn'd the faded year;

Sighing (I heard the love-lorn fwain)

“ *Wifhnefs**—ah! *Wifhnefs* walketh here!”

* An expression used by the vulgar in the north of Devon, to express local melancholy. There is something sublime in this impersonation of *Wifhnefs*.

EX TEMPORE LINES

TO THE
AUTHOR'S WIFE.

December, 1793.

HEAVEN's blessing on my dearest love!

O may the joys unvaried prove

Thro' all the changes of the year;

Whether December's blast austere

Shake our lone cottage, as the blaze

Illumes its walls with cheering rays;

Or whether May's delicious green

Softens the little garden-scene;

Or fervid August, 'mid the bower

Cool with its fruits the roseate hour;

Or calm we pass, afar from strife,

The October of a private life;

Or yet our quiet we retain

When wintry storms come round again!

L I N E S

READ TO THE

MISS S——, &c.

ON A WATER-PARTY FROM S——S.

1792.

TO soothe each poor neglected maid,
Who loads the winds of the parade
With sighs, for Simon or for Simpson
(Abortive sighs, that reach not L———e,
Though L———'s beaux might suit so well
The zenith of a S———s belle)
The *Muses*, ever prone to pity,
Would pour the love-devoted ditty.
Yet every maiden cries out—" Pish!
"What can the *Muses* do, but wish?"
Too true: and though they've wish'd so long,
Their offspring—it is all—a song.

Yet shall the Nine, my girls, produce
Some good, and prove of solid use,
While in your lovely forms they rise,
And stream their radiance from your eyes—
While shines, *Sophia*, bright in thee,
The lively, gay *Terpsichore*,
Who, smiling as her steps advance,
Lightly threads the sportive dance—
While the *Muse of pensive air*,
In thee, *Louisa*, still more fair,
Beams from those lids a gentle ray;
And melting in a lovelorn lay,
Tho' the tenderest of the Nine,
Boasts not a voice so sweet as thine—
Whilst *Urania*, fond to shew
Her heavenly attributes below,
Eliza, to our sense imparts,
In thee the type of spotless hearts;

That placid look, that with please,
That affability and ease,
That openness so free from guile,
That meekness, such as angels smile!

Why stops my verse—in such a pothor
Why hesitate, as if no other
Were worthy of the mighty honor
To take the Muse for once upon her?
Where is *Calliope*? Where *Clio*?

Where is *Euterpe*? Why demur?
The Virgins of S——s will sigh “O!
“ ’Tis hard to stomach such a slur!”
True—when, in Sunday-cloaths start forth,
Too luminous to touch the earth,
Of blazing beauties such a host,
Whose orbs, on other days, are lost!—
That, as the Sabbath-sun goes down,
Strait re-assume the russet gown,

And, though on days of rest, fine ladies,
Shew us, on Mondays, what their trade is ;
While, lutestrings bright lock'd up, Miss Jenny
Behind the counter turns a penny ;
Or, though a vapourish *Polyhymnie*,
Cuts, many a rasher deep, the flitch in,
Adorning with her hams the chimney,
In the meridian of a kitchen.
But come—we need not stoop so low,
As if for subjects at a loss :
Still may the Nine their boons bestow
Amidst the gentry of S——s.
Perhaps, the hearts of men to win, sent
By the fine features of Miss V——t,
Can they, a moment, cease to ape
The graces of her polisht shape,
And, as her figure they assume,
Light up her cheek's unfading bloom ?

Say, will they not delight to ruffle
 Soft in the fattins of Miss B——l,
 Her vocables so pretty, mincing—
 Nodding her airy plumes and wincing?
 Thrown aside her tragic pomps,
 I see *Melpomene* in romps!

* * * * *

Yet lo! a Muse of finer texture
 As palpitates her bleeding heart,
 Kneels down, with tremulous genuflexure,
 And prays to be assign'd her part.
 'Tis *Erato*—the Muse of love—
 With fighting virgins hand and glove;
 Quick through their bosoms as she rushes,
 And kindles with new fire their blushes.
 But (lest this *Erato* should put her,
 Poor maiden! in too great a flutter)
 Behold, she dares not, at her peril,
 Inspire the form of Mary T——l;

A form by nature's self array'd,
By the delighted graces deckt ;
That wants not *any Muse's aid*
To give it interest or effect ;
Where as the countenance beams forth
Instinctive sense and genuine worth,
And the submitted eye—the cheek
(Suffus'd with mantling blushes) speak
More eloquent than words—we see
Thy triumph, sweet Simplicity !
And may those beauties quickly rivet
Not such a bosom, as in fly men
Oft turns upon caprice's pivot,
But a found heart dovetail'd by Hymen !

THE
T O M B
OF
R O U S S E A U.

THANKS to *Eliza's art, that trac'd
This fairy spot in colors clear;
Pure as her own enlighten'd taste,
And soft as melting pity's tear.

Romantic isle! Thy poplars wave
Their gloom, to please a parted shade:
And yet they tremble o'er the grave
Where a cold Deist's bones are laid.

* These lines were addressed to Miss Eliza S—— on her presenting the author with a drawing of *Rousseau's Tomb in the Isle of Poplars*, just before her departure from S—— to the Isle of Wight, on July 10, 1793.

What tho' they whisper to the breeze
 Plaints that might soothe the ear of love;
As Halcyon fills the ruffled seas,
 Or warbling woodlark charms the grove;

They murmur but to waken pain,
 Where Virtue holds no quiet sleep :
They touch the gentle soul in vain,
 Where blushing virgins dare not weep.

Yet shall I love the Elysian isle
 That oft may rise, in kind relief,
To bid me catch Eliza's smile,
 And calm, by Fancy's aid, my grief.

And when far off the bark shall bear
 Her form from this forsaken shore ;
When my poor widow'd heart shall share
 Eliza's sympathy no more ;

Haply the pencil'd scene may move
To memory dear, a thousand sighs—
But ah! that *Tomb* can only prove—
The type of all my buried joys!

EUGENIUS.

I.

WITHIN a deep secluded glen

Where a path, sloping from the embattled dome,

Gleam'd, and then vanish'd in an oaken gloom,

Eugenius thro' the shade of night

Retiring from the haunts of men,

Oft hail'd a spectre-groupe by the moon's wandering
light.

II.

" Ghosts of my fathers (would he cry)

" I muse upon each venerable form,

Whether you meet the spirit of the storm,

- “ Or glide in stillness thro’ those oaks !—
“ E’en now I see you from on high
“ Descending—you alone my penfive soul invokes.

III.

- “ Near yon white rock, I bid aspire
“ That sacred Mausoleum to receive
“ This frame, when the frail sons of clay I leave
“ To greet your never-dying train !
“ Then shall I join that valorous fire,
“ The haughty-helmed chief who fell on Cressy’s
“ plain.”

IV.

Thus would he cry ; and roving wild
As any maniac, tread the glimmering dale ;
Nor seek his mansion till the stars grew pale

Before the kindling blush of day ;
When, as if watchful of his child,
The hoary-headed groom trac'd out his master's way.*

* This is scarcely an outline : it would be easy to draw a very strong portrait of a gentleman, whose singularities are ridiculed by the inconsiderate and regarded with pity by reflecting minds. But, in reverence to his many virtues and amiable qualities the author has noticed only two traits of his character—*his believing in the communion of the living with the deceased*, and *his fondness for frequenting a deep glen* just below his house, at *midnight*, where he has actually built a Mausoleum for his tomb, and where he believes that he often meets and *converses with the spirits of his ancestors*. See ILLUSTRATIONS; where are two short essays on *Spirits* and on *Family*.

TO
A CLERGYMAN.

A FRAGMENT.

1787.

O With the robe of honor be thou cloth'd
And with perfection's garment, to the seat
Of eloquence ascending, or the shrine,
The sanctuary of God! Thus all thy tribes
Shall hail thy lustre as the morning-star
Divinely bright—as the full moon's clear orb;
As the sun shining on the temple-dome
Of the most High; and as the rainbow's hue
Coloring the darkness; as the spring's soft shower
Of roses; as the lilies by the stream,
And, as the tree of frankincense, what time
The summer glows; as the fair olive-boughs
Budding forth fruit, and as a cypress, high
Above the groves, and spreading thro' the clouds!

SONNET.

FROST.

June 1, 1795.

WOOING the shadows of the morning moon
See with rude influence pallid Frost hath chill'd
The glimmering landscape, as in slumber still'd,
It meets the first faint blush of orient June :
Yet, with the lustre of the night's clear noon
The stars a moment kindle, and then fade.
Now opens to the sun the shivering scene,
As to the north *solanum*'s darker green
Shrivels in blackness, and the barley blade
Springs with a sickly fallowness, to shade
The ridgy ground—as the pale hawthorn screen
Hangs, hoar with rime, its scanty blooms between,
And the rill crackles, where we cross the glade,
Tho' glittering to the solar orb serene !

SONNET

TO

A TOAD.

THO' loathsome thou appear, 'tis said,

Thou "hid'st a jewel in thy head!"

But why, my Toad, should we recur

To vulgar tales thy credit to support?

Come forth—and who would throw on thee a slur

Shall own, thou hast good reason to retort!

Come, nor within that ivied nook,

Resign thy beauty to the brook!

Lo, not the maid, for whom so cruel

Poor Colin heaves incessant sighs,

Boasts such a lustre as illumines thine eyes!

Then let us not too hastily condemn

The old tradition of the jewel;

Since in each eye we find the precious gem.

SONNET

TO

AN ARTIST,

EMPLOYED IN NEW-MODELLING THE PLEASURE-GROUNDS

OF MY LORD —

AH! what avails, fair Artift, to diffuse
So bright a verdure o'er the fwelling lawn;
To guide the stream by gradual windings drawn
Down the rich dale, or paint the wood with hues
That seem to kindle, as amid the dews
They dance, to catch the crimfon of the dawn?
Ah! what avails, that many a nimble fawn
Wantons beneath the foliage, if the Mufe
Inspire not the poffeffor, fond to dart
The eye of fympathetic pleasure round?

Alas ! the poor possessor hath no heart ! *
Here lies in silence hush'd the untrodden ground,
Tho' nature boast the elegance of art ;
Unless when vulgar notes to revelry resound !

* To *relish* the beauties of nature, it is necessary to possess a
good heart.

SONNET

IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE REPRESENTATION OF THE
TRAGEDY OF LILLO IN TOWN,

When some *middle-aged* persons exclaimed, "It is too deep!"

WHERE is the sigh, the kind relieving tear?

"Alas!" (the audience cries) "it is too deep!"

Thrill'd by the stroke of agony severe,

They gaze in blank suspense; they cannot weep.

"We who have known the pangs of real woe

"That oft from fiend-like machinations sprung;

"We, who have mark'd the bitter ills that flow

"From vice, resign these portraits to the young.

"Yes! 'tis for minds unpractis'd in the world

"To view such pictures with a transient pain;

"And tho' o'er Frenzy's wild a moment hurl'd,

"Yet feel no dizzy fever of the brain:

"O'er the drear scene their lively fancy plays,

"And gilds e'en horror's self with fairy rays."

TO THE
EVENING-STAR.

MEEK Star of Eve, whose placid ray
I prize beyond the blaze of day,
O softly gild the waves that roll
Dark o'er my agitated soul !

So shall the charmed furge subside
Into a gently-murmuring tide,
Reflecting each affection kind,
A faithful mirror of the mind.

Yet, while no storm upheaves the sea,
Far be a torpid calm from me !

Unruffled tho' the current flow,
Still may the whispering zephyr blow ;
Tho' Peace each tumult hush, may Love
With balmy breath my bosom move!

TO
A YOUNG OFFICER,

TOO FOND OF HIS LITERARY STUDIES.

AH why, my friend, perplex thy studious mind
Thus unreliev'd, by Aristotle's page ?
Say, *Henry*, dost thou think the musing sage,
If to his books, each live-long hour, confin'd,
Could from his closet have inform'd mankind ?
Go, in the scenes of active life engage !
Go, if thy country with apostates wage
Portentous war, go bid thy lore combin'd
With military skill, thy Albion aid !
So shall the scholar's and the soldier's bays
Wove to a double wreath, thy temples shade :
So shalt thou gain the more distinguish'd praise
That Xenophon's or Cæsar's worth repaid ;
And emulate the fame of ancient days !

SONNET

ADDRESS TO

TWO INGENIOUS YOUNG LADIES.

SOFTEN'D by shading verdure to display
The rose's tints, in every tender fold ;
The mellow richness of the peach portray,
Or paint the little warbler's plume of gold ;
To touch the bosom with each melting tone
That musick, in divine expression, pours ;
Such energies pure taste and feeling own,
And such, my lovely *Harmonists*,* are yours.
'Tis then in you, to grace the calm retreat,
And bid perennial pleasures round you spring ;
Nor sigh the giddy multitude to meet,
Where Dissipation flits on airy wing :
And they to whom domestic joys are dear,
They only shine in woman's proper sphere.

* In coloring as well as musick.

TO
MISS S.

WRITTEN IN MARCH 1792.

WHILE *Elegance*, unfolding o'er thy form
Her airy vest with heaven's own tincture bright,
Sheds on thy cheeks the vernal blushes warm,
And radiates from thine eyes in lovely light;
While in the sweetness of thy voice she owns
Accents that from the trancing spheres she stole,
And from thy harp elicits melting tones
That speak the musick of the pensive soul;
While by thy glowing pencil she portrays
Angelic shapes, that beam the types of thee—
Regard the muse who sighs in soften'd lays,
Attracted by thy moral harmony,
To each fine tone the trembling spirit gives,
Breathes but to catch thy glance, and in thy essence lives!

TO THE

VICAR OF M——'s NUMEROUS PIGEONS,

JUST AS THE AUTHOR WAS PREPARING TO SHOOT THEM.

POOR Pigeons! by your *quondam* vicar priz'd,
Tho' now condemn'd to fall, an easy mark
To piece that's cock'd at random in the dark—
Ye, to whose bursting crops is sacrific'd
The glebe's fat produce; whether *coney-park* *
Or *way-field* *, o'er whose waving grain the lark
Chaunts his shrill orisons, the corn supply—
Sweet birds! how ye salute the passer by,
Dropping your oily burthens on his head!
Alas! I cannot court you at my ease—
Tho' softly billing, ye are full of fleas!
Ah! ye may mourn, indeed, your patron dead—
For lo! amongst you a most barbarous vicar
Who cannot breathe till he has pull'd the trigger!

* Fields belonging to the glebe.

TO

C O L M A.

SEE, whiten'd into foam, the tide
O'er yonder bank its billows urge ;
And down the blooming valley, wide
Descending, whirl the sheeted surge.
And lo the full moon from on high,
Seems, as she gilds the dimwood shade,
To smile, with a malignant eye,
Upon the wreck herself hath made.
'Tis thus the waves of passion roll
Impetuous over *Oscar's* mind ;
Nor can his agitated soul
One little moment's quiet find—
But ah ! withdraw thy radiant form,
Nor, *Colma* ! triumph in the storm !

O S C A R.

YES! I enjoy the raging element—

Ye winds! your roar is pleasant to my soul!

Hah! 'twas a dreadful stroke that sudden rent

Yon flaming oak! And hah! they shake the pole—

The thunders that across heaven's concave roll,

Peal after peal! Ye rushing woods that sweep

The huge rocks scatter'd o'er the yawning dell,

I love to see your mass of shadow deep

Now shiver to the lightning, and now swell

To a still darker gloom. But O! that sail—

I saw it thro' the parted foliage break!

Again I caught the canvas glimmering pale

On the black surge! I heard a chilling shriek!

They die—I only live, to fill with sighs the vale!

TO

C O L M A.

ALL is in silence hush'd. Where broke
The storm, behold the ravag'd dale :
While leaves the tintured streamlet choak,
Its banks are mark'd by circlets * pale.
Yet lo! the star of evening beams
From the dark cloud emerging bright :
And the dale cheer'd by pity seems ;
Its freshen'd verdure drinks delight.
But when from Love's tempestuous whirl
I rest a moment, woe is me !
Alas ! I catch, relentless girl,
Of pity not a ray from thee !
And O ! that still suspense, my fair,
Is but the pause of blank despair !—

* Fairy circles, probably occasioned by lightning.

THE
PASSIONATE LADY.

THE dimpled smiles, the stately mien
Which mark the loves and beauty's queen
In Daphne fair we find :
And who perceives not, lucky hit!
Diana's chasteness, Pallas' wit,
Unite in Chloe's mind ?

But Dian chaste, nor Pallas wise,
Nor, spite of her alluring eyes,
The arbiters of love,
So winning, wanton, debonnaire,
With angry *Phillis* can compare,
Who wields the bolts of Jove !

Behold! to swell her rage, the god
Who rules Olympus with a nod,
Surrenders all his powers :
His thunder now her voice inspires ;
Her flashing eyes confess his fires,
Or quick dissolve in showers !

THE
CAPRICIOUS BEAUTY.

WILT thou, *Emira*, peerless maid,
An honest truth approve ;
Nor close thine ear to Reason's voice
Attun'd by softer love ?
Why are those witching looks that seem
The effulgence of the soul,
Darted with such a wild caprice
On *Granville*, *Allen*, *Hole* ?
Thy sportive eyes on those who lift
Under thy magic banner,
Too often hast thou, in my fight,
Maneuvered in this manner.

A languish from those lustrous orbs
On sighing *Granville* thrown,
He gazes with a fond surprize,
And marks thee for his own.
With eagerness he now prepares
Again to catch thine eye :
The rambler, drest in smiles, is fixt
On *Allen* sitting by.
Allen, in extasy, exclaims,
“ O Lady most divine ! ”—
But sudden sees the averted rays
On *Hole* propitious shine.
Ere *Hole* hath power to bless the glance,
Alas ! the glance is flown ;
And, beaming once on *Allen* more,
Is back to *Granville* gone.

You think your smiles subdue mankind :

Emira! grant it true—

The beauteous adder hath a sting,*

Yet bears a balsam too.

* The body of a dead serpent bruised on the wound it has occasioned, is *said* to be an infallible remedy for its bite : common report is sufficient to warrant a poetical allusion.

S O N G.

WHERE harebells had imbib'd the dew
And clos'd their cups, my limbs I threw :
The silver lamp of Heaven shone bright ;
And my heart sicken'd at the fight.
The winds blew shrill : a gathering cloud
Flung o'er the moon its fable shroud ;
While large drops, like the tears I shed,
Fell cold upon my naked head.
“ Ah, darken'd orb, too plain I see
“ An emblem of myself in thee ;
“ While, chafing joy, affliction pale
“ Draws over me the sombre veil !”

And now, before the rising blast,
The clouds in scatter'd fragments past
Far from the lunar disk, till clear'd
From gloom, the splendid moon appear'd.
Twinkled the glistening leaves more green,
And soften'd lustre cloath'd the scene.

“ Fair orb ! 'tis thine again to smile ;
“ But my poor bosom—woe the while !
“ Again thy rays the landscape cheer ;
“ But joy no more shall brighten here !”

S O N G.

LONG for his fair, delightful toil,
As summer ting'd the sapphire skies,
Had *Alleyn* bid the garden smile,
And mark'd its varied beauties rise.
Here many a shrub its sparkling hue
Flaunted amid the solar beam ;
There, its rich-tinted leaves withdrew
To shade the silver-winding stream.
Once, thro' the vegetable blaze
As in fond trance the lover stray'd,
He met *Elvira* in the maze,
And thus address'd the blushing maid :

" Survey those flowering shrubs, my fair ;

" Full many a blossom may'ft thou see—

" Yet less are all the blooms they bear

" Than half the sighs I heave for thee !"

TO

J U L I A,

IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE AUTHOR'S BREAKING HER FAN.

1793.

TOO sure, thy fan, malignant fate

Impell'd me thus to break—

Ah *Julia*! I perceive, too late,

The fragments—what they speak!

And canst thou, *Julia*, bid thy fan

The cruel doom impart?

Thy scorn, alas! do all I can,

Thy scorn will break my heart!

EX TEMPORE LINES

ON

A LADY'S LOSING HER EYELASHES BY AN EXPLOSION
OF GUNPOWDER.

THE lightning, that beneath the shade
Of each delicious eyelash play'd,
So softly glanc'd upon my heart,
I fondly nurst the thrilling smart.

Now on thine eyes I dare not gaze,
But fly from the too fervid blaze,
Lest I should perish, scorcht by flashes
Such as consum'd thy sweet eyelashes!

S O N G.

TO

A N N A.

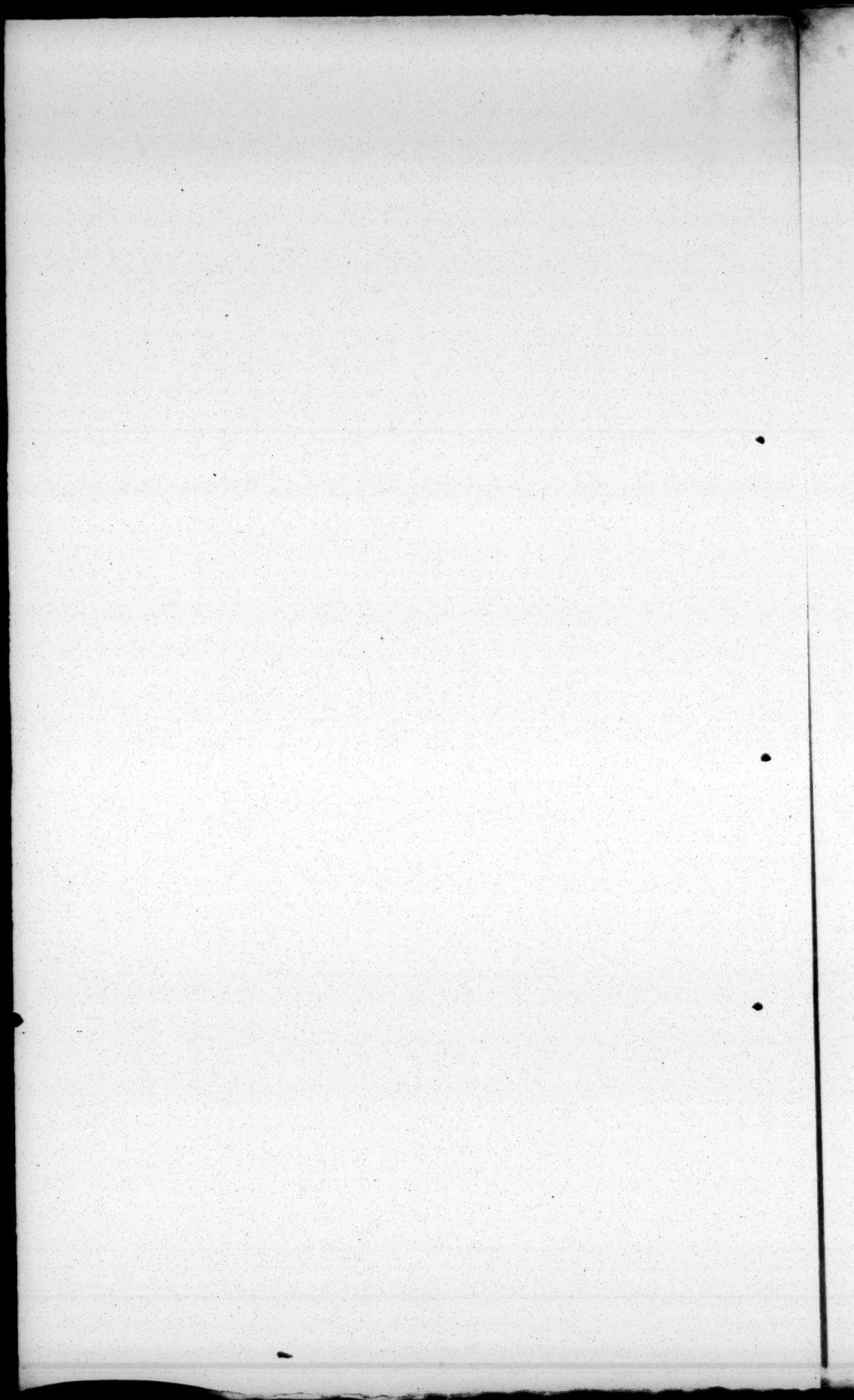
SEE, *Anna*, see yon orb of light
Diffuse the genial beam :
All feel a vivifying heat,
Tho' none in the extreme.

But in a * burning-glass collect
The widely-radiant fires,
And turn them on a mortal man :
In flames the wretch expires.

* This passage does not allude to the small burning-glasses in common use, but those surprizing ones said to have been employed by Archimedes at the siege of Syracuse—such as consumed whole fleets of the Romans with all the men on board them, in an almost incredibly-short space of time.

So, while the rays that light thine eyes,
Alike on all are thrown ;
To all they give a gentle warmth,
A heat intense to none.

Yet, *Anna*, summon up thy charms,
Tho' fierce the effulgence be !
Yet—yet direct them to a point ;
And find that point—in me.



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ILLUSTRATIONS,

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Page 63.

*Oft hail'd a spectre-groupe, by the moon's wandering
light.*

THE absurdity and evil tendency of rejecting all truths which have not the support of demonstration, can scarce be sufficiently exposed and reprobated. How the scriptures have been treated on these grounds, I need not at present observe. To those who have been inured, in the course of their education, to a long process of logical and mathematical reasoning, sacred writ hath often appeared too unsystematical and ill-compacted to claim their attention. But many of this description, though not daring enough to depreciate the scriptures, yet ridicule as superstitious preju-

dices, a variety of opinions which have been received in all ages, and which even the scriptures themselves confirm. Among these, the popular belief in apparitions, or the appearance of the deceased to the living, hath been dismissed as chimerical. With such persons as do not profess to believe the existence of the soul in a state of separation from the body, I would not wish to reason. I would only suggest a few hints to our philosophical believers, who presume not to abandon the common faith, though they attack every thing as prejudice which they think they can detach from morals or religion.

One of the arguments which these people employ against the probability of spirits appearing to us, is, that in every country the stories of Apparitions are less numerous and less currently received, in proportion as its civilization increases; and that the greater number have been discarded at first sight as absurd, or have been proved, however specious, to be false, in conse-

quence of a close investigation. Allowing this argument its full force and scope, it by no means tends to prove that spirits never appear. All we can reasonably grant to it, must be, that the greater part of the narratives of spirits have owed their origin to fancy, their propagation to credulity. And, as there is no doubt but the more ignorant, the more credulous we are, it is no wonder that unenlightened countries should be more fertile in superstitious inventions, than others which are civilized. This must be invariably the case. A vast diversity of phenomena which were thought supernatural in the darker ages, are now generally known to arise in the common course of nature. But it does not follow, that there is nothing supernatural. On this ground we may reject the miracles of Christ as illusions. We may argue, at length, that God himself hath no existence but in the imaginations of men, because *timor facit Deos*. There are a variety of false religions in the known world :

but we are not hence to conclude, that all are fictitious. Nor, because most Apparition-stories are fabulous, does it follow, that all are fabulous. The general consent of all ages and nations hath been admitted as an argument in favour of the existence of a God; though the Deity hath been multiplied into innumerable divinities by ignorance or superstition. In the same manner, the general consent of all people, however remote or unconnected, on the subject of spirits, should be admitted as an argument in favour of their appearance; although Apparitions have been multiplied into a thousand times their number. So general is the consent of all ages and nations on this subject, that not only the best historians, such as Livy, Tacitus, and Clarendon have related accounts of Apparitions, but writers who could not have copied from one another, have mentioned the very same circumstances as attending the appearance of spirits. The spectre exhibited by the younger Pliny in his Epistles, is the

same kind of spirit, and accompanied with the same phenomena, as the ghost described by Cumberland in his Observer. This is a striking fact in proof of Apparitions.

Again, it hath been argued, that in most tales of this sort, there is wanting *Dei dignus vindice nodus*—that the matter is too frivolous for supernatural interposition. But are we competent judges on the subject? Perhaps, an affair apparently trivial, may involve some important event in futurity. Is it not presumption in us to say, that the errand of a spirit was frivolous? Or, admitting the observation in many cases, shall we assert that nothing can possibly happen to require or justify such an interference? Shall we presume to fathom the counsels of God, or determine the ends of his Providence?

That spirits somewhere exist, after their separation from the body, I assume as a point allowed by the philosophical believer. But, where they exist, is a

question not easily resolved. Conscious of our actions, our departed friends may be supposed to guard us from danger; may pitch their tents around our beds. It was SECKER's opinion (and the *Archbishop* was never accused of credulity or superstition) that "our
" spirits, when separated from the body, shall be
" sensible of what is transacting on earth—shall be
" witnesses of the conduct and sentiments of the
" friends we leave behind us." Now, if spirits thus familiarly approach us, is it not easy to suppose, that they can render this intercourse perceptible to our senses—or, that they can visibly appear to us, without either trouble or commotion? Considering, therefore, the ease with which they may appear, (according to our weak apprehensions at least) we shall no longer, perhaps, object to their appearing, on the ground of trivial circumstances, or useless errands. But surely, though their dwelling be as remote as possible, though they be utterly unconscious of our transactions here,

their nature may admit (for aught we know to the contrary) of an instantaneous passing from the place of their abode to our earthly habitation.

How again, it is asked, can a spirit be visible—an immaterial being to our corporeal eyes? I have always considered this question as ridiculous: for it can never be solved, nor ought it to be asked, before we know how spirits exist. But, granting that they are essentially invisible, the Deity has surely the power of investing a spirit with matter, in order to produce visibility. I hope it is not unphilosophical, to talk of the soul and the body, as united in one person. A spirit, then, by the superinduction of the lightest shadowy substance may be rendered visible to the eye, though still impalpable.

In short, I will venture to assert, that he, who truly believes the scriptures, must believe in the *Appearance* of spirits.

That they were once accustomed to manifest themselves to the eyes of man, is a truth which he cannot possibly gainsay. The Apparition of Samuel, conjured up by the witch of Endor, is strong scriptural evidence in point. I know it hath been doubted whether Samuel really appeared or not: but it hath been doubted only by those who would pervert the plain meaning of scripture. The sacred historian positively asserts, that it was *Samuel himself*: the son of Sirach credits the assertion.

But let us refer to the gospel of Christ. In St. Matthew, we find that our Saviour's disciples, when they saw Jesus walking on the sea, "were troubled, saying, *It is a spirit.*" And our Saviour, after his resurrection, appearing to his disciples, was dreaded as *a spirit*: but he said—"Handle me and see: for a *spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.*" Now it is not to be supposed, that our Saviour would humour notions absolutely false and groundless. If



spirits could not appear, he would have removed the terror of his disciples, much more effectually, by informing them that what they imagined, was impossible. But he affirms, that he is not a spirit, with this very remarkable observation, that "*a spirit hath not flesh and bones.*" We have here even a definition of a spirit. We learn, from the mouth of our Lord himself, that a spirit, though impalpable, may be rendered visible. If there was no such thing as a spirit, Jesus Christ has here imposed a falshood upon the world.

That spirits have appeared, then, is plain from scripture. And what should prevent their continuing still to visit us? It hath indeed been supposed, that, from our Saviour's time all Apparitions have ceased: but I see not a shadow of reason to support the conjecture. To collect instances of Apparitions is beside my purpose; which is merely to represent the absurdity of rejecting as false and unfounded, every

account of our intercourse with the world of spirits. As I am in possession, however, of a story which seems well authenticated, and which, I believe, was never published, I shall beg leave to present it to my readers.

When Admiral Coates was commanding a squadron in the East Indies he met with this extraordinary incident. Retiring one night to his lodging-room, he saw the form of his wife standing at his bed-side, as plainly (he used to say) as he had ever seen her in England. Greatly agitated, he hurried from the room, and joined his brother-officers, who were not yet retired to rest. But willing to persuade himself that this appearance was a mere illusion, he went again into his bed-room, where he again saw his wife, in the same attitude as before. She did not attempt to speak to him ; but then slowly waved her hand and disappeared. In the last letters he had received from England he was informed, that his wife was perfectly well : his mind, in short, had been quite

composed. Of this very singular occurrence, however, he immediately set down the particulars in his memorandum-book, noticing the exact time in which it happened. He saw also a minute made to the same purpose, by several of his friends on board. The ship had begun her voyage homeward; so that before he could receive any intelligence from England, he arrived there: and on enquiry for his wife, he not only found that she was dead, but that she died at the very same hour of the night, when her spirit appeared to him in the East Indies. This account the admiral himself has often given to a near relation, who had seen indeed the memorandum on the admiral's pocket-book; and who more than once related to me the above particulars.

I would only remark in conclusion, that we should check every propensity to dismiss as untrue what we cannot account for by the rules of short-sighted reason. Such a disposition, which is founded

in vanity and presumption, may materially affect our happiness; since it generally terminates in pyrrhonism—often in infidelity. The belief in spirits, which I have here professed, hath, doubtless, a religious tendency. There are some, it is true, who would not believe, though one rose from the dead: yet on most minds, the ideas I have suggested concerning spirits might produce a beneficial influence. The circumstance of Apparitions includes the existence of the soul: it implies a future state: it intimates our connexion with the world of spirits: it brings departed friends around us: it even secures to us the endearing satisfaction of a parent's care, though that parent be no more seen: it bids us "rejoice with trembling;" and it inspires us with clearer and livelier ideas of the omnipresence of our God.

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—*My fathers, (he would cry)*

I muse upon each venerable form.

That very great respect hath been paid to family, in all ages of the world, is an indisputable fact. Satirists, it is true, have inveighed against that overweening pride which raises itself on the basis of connexion, and looks down with a contemptuous eye on all who are not happy enough to boast a good descent, or an honourable alliance. And such pride has ever deserved the severest censure. Yet the general respect that has been paid to family, is rational and just. There are a variety of circumstances which increase or diminish the reverence that waits on ancestry. When, in good families, connexion is scrupulously regarded, the circumstance of birth commands homage and veneration. But when the patrician race intermix with the plebeian, they lose that influence.

over the minds of men, which distance and peculiarity before enabled them to support. This is generally the case in times of commercial intercourse : and the rapid accumulation of wealth by various and extensive merchandize, occasions, also, the comparative decline of those who have been long venerated for their hereditary demerits. The merchant quickly amasses a fortune superior to that of the country gentleman, who retains only those lands which had conferred indeed on his family distinction and importance, but which are now beginning to lose their value, as compared with much larger possessions. The well-born, however, have been invariably respected by the sensible and discerning, amidst the general diffusion of opulence and luxury. And, though people of birth are sometimes observed to pay too great a deference to family pretensions, I never heard family decried or ridiculed by any person who was not conscious of some defect in his own.

Whether this deference to family be founded in reason or not, may be worth our enquiry.

He, who is descended from people of education, inherits, in general, a different turn of understanding and disposition from the man who is born of mean or vulgar parents. And it is natural to suppose, that that peculiar turn inherent in the man of family, is by far the most respectable. The offspring of gentlemen are born with a delicate bodily contexture, very easily distinguishable from that of vulgar children. Why, then, may not the mental constitution be equally different? The same progeny are found to assimilate, more or less, in the features or general cast of the countenance: and the resemblance, however faint, is sufficient to distinguish them from another race. This transmission of corporeal likenesses is so much in the order of nature, that a child very frequently resembles his remote progenitors. We may be allowed to conclude, therefore, that there are transmitted dif-

tinctions of mind as well as body. That mental and bodily diseases are handed down alike to posterity, is a fact too feelingly acknowledged to require argument or examples to prove it. The delirious imagination of the father is too often entailed on the son, with all its peculiarities. And mental debility as well as insanity seems the character of particular families. When we observe a father weak in understanding, or though possessing a good memory deficient in judgment, (or *vice versa*) we often see his children labouring under the same infirmities of intellect. If, then, the depravity of imagination, the frailness of judgment or memory be transmissible, why may not a clear perception, a vigorous understanding, an elevation of mind, a generosity of sentiment be hereditary also?—It is hard to determine, that the peculiarities of a sound mind should have no influence on our offspring, whilst those of an unsound mind are often so miserably felt from generation to generation.

That the grand outlines of sense are the same in the same family, though an individual or two may somewhat differ from the rest, we should generally discover on a close inspection. One race appears remarkable for solidity of understanding; another, for vivacity or sprightliness; another for wit; and another, perhaps, for an intuitive discernment. The disposition, also, hath different forms in different families. There is a nobleness of temper runs through some; while a softness and delicacy are conspicuous in others.

Now it seems reasonable to think, that the distinctive qualities of a family, which, regularly attentive to connexion, hath never mixed indiscriminately with the vulgar, and hath enjoyed the continued and almost uninterrupted advantages of a good education, should be more respectable than those of a Plebeian race. The distinctive qualities of a noble family, at any point of time more valuable than those of a Plebeian, are

still transmitted with greater purity. The lower order of people have mean and contracted notions. There is ever a mercenary selfishness adhering to their occupations. Their understandings are exercised only within the narrow compass of a particular business, which seldom requires any stretch of thought—any exertion of the higher faculties. The seeds of genius or virtue have, doubtless, been sown in the vulgar mind: but they have seldom opportunities to spring up, or arise conspicuous enough for observation. They are allowed to rest, undisturbed, from sire to son; and, owing to this long quiescence, lose much of their original excellence and gradually die away. The probability of this will appear, even on a survey of such different occupations among the common people, as afford different opportunities of bringing the mind into action. Look to the day-labourer, and you will find, that he has hardly an idea unconnected with his rustic employment; of which, indeed, in

some counties, he is unable to give you an intelligible account. Examine a pin-maker, and he can scarcely explain the process of pin-making, because, perhaps, he is concerned only in the fabrication of the head: round the head, then, his ideas revolve: or, if it be the point of the pin, they are at the point. Descend however, into a mine in Cornwall, and question the miner on the subject of his occupation; and you will not be dissatisfied with his answers. The information he will give you, whether the metal, whose vein he is pursuing, the complicated construction of the engine, or the history of the mine in general, be the subject, will invariably shew an expansion of understanding, while his readiness to communicate his knowledge discovers civility and courtesy. This hath been the character of the Cornish tanners from Diodorus Siculus to Borlase. They are a distinct race of men, very widely differing from the rustic labourers in their vicinity. There is no doubt but

the capacity of the miners has been much enlarged by their own social communications and their intercourse with various characters.

As the miners have the advantage over the common herd, so among the higher orders have ancient families the superiority over those which newly spring up into notice. This I would say, is *generally* the case: for there are, surely, many and great exceptions to the position. Whilst the *novi homines* are usually discriminated by pertness and arrogance, there is a native nobility, a loftiness of spirit, in those who, well descended, are able to look back on an honourable lineage. He, whose forefathers have been long illustrious, or long respected, is already established in the heart of a grateful neighbourhood. He hath ample room for the display of the talents and integrity of his ancestors, which are readily recognized in himself. In the mean time, the new-created gentleman, endeavouring to bring his crude unripened virtues, his

equivocal qualities into light, is checked, at every effort, exposed as he is to the censure of affectation, of haughtiness, and of pertinacity. The man, through whose veins is flowing a rich tide of uncontaminated blood, is often remarked for the pristine sincerity, the old hospitality, the honest ingenuousness of family.

These qualities, so distinguishably preserved, are in a great measure owing to the *continued* influence of a superior education. I do not assert, that the genius or virtues of a single person, though brought to light by the best education, and exerted amid the most favourable opportunities, must be necessarily apparent in his offspring. But when genius and virtue have been called out, in the father, and continually exercised, they are less inclined to stagnate, or lie dormant in the son. And the continuance of the same education—the same opportunities, may, probably, fix, after a generation or two, the peculiar qualities of a family, so as to render them hereditary; provided that

family descend not to degrading connexions. And though these peculiarities may lurk unseen for a generation (like diseases) they generally re-appear, and come forth, indeed, on the first animating occasion, with recruited force and spirit.

These observations will surely be deemed just, if, reasoning from analogy, we look to the breed of horses and other animals. The ancestry of a horse is enquired into with scrupulous anxiety : and with the generous blood of that noble animal, are transmitted, from generation to generation, a spirit fiery, yet tractable, a gentleness never lowered into dulness, and an intelligence always superior to that of the vulgar breed of horses. And, regularly corresponding with these high faculties, the beauty of his external conformation may claim the attention of philosophers; though, I confess, it is little regarded but by the groom or the jockey. With the same advantages of proper training, the good qualities of a family, may in the same

manner be preserved unblemished. Strange it is, yet true, that we pay little regard to this particular, in respect to the race of men; though, as to other animals, we all see and acknowledge the necessity of attending to it.

We have sufficient historical evidence, I think, to prove that the endowments of the mind are hereditary. The great qualities of the last Athenian king, may be said to have lived after his death: it was upwards of three hundred years that he flourished in the Archons. In the younger Brutus was revived all the heroism and patriotic spirit of his remote progenitor. The houses of the Messalæ, the Publicolæ, and the Valerii, were characterized, for six hundred years, by particular virtues and talents. And the Decii retained the original character of their family, at the decline of the Roman empire. The Incas of Peru were long an illustrious race of princes, distinguished by the same family-disposition. In short, the sense of all mankind

seems to accord with the most eminent examples, in rendering the position I have been maintaining highly probable. And, were I disposed to bring proofs of hereditary virtue from our own country, I might refer to many noble instances, beside "the blood of all
"the Howards."

The conclusion I would draw from these premises is, that the respect we pay to family hath its foundation not in prejudice but in reason. Granting, however, that the whole originates in prejudice, I question whether it may not, and hath not ever been attended with the most salutary consequences. It is a high and animating idea, that though our identical persons be no more seen, we may yet live in our progeny, by transmitting to them the features and form both of our body and our mind—that we may immortalize ourselves in our race—that our very disposition and talents and virtues, may shine forth, amidst a revolution of ages, in those who sprung from our loins, and

are to inherit our possessions. It is a thought which seems to confer immortality on human beings, even on this side of the grave. And, while there is precariousness enough in all sublunary enjoyments, to humble pride, and to damp the triumphs of vanity, it is a thought which may be usefully indulged, if it guard the man of family against every sordid connexion or pursuit; if it urge him to respect the constitution both of his body and his mind; if it stimulate him to deeds of exemplary worth; if it fix his attention to the education of his offspring; if it add a new motive to parental anxiety. And surely our partialities to men of family are sufficiently defensible; if it only be considered, that we may more reasonably confide in the honour and integrity of those who, conscious of their blood, stand forth as the representatives of a virtuous ancestry; than in the good qualities of persons, who have no illustrious progenitors to represent, whose vices argue not degeneracy, whose virtues are with-

out emulation; since they have no escutcheon which, either by the former or the latter, they can tarnish or adorn.

Page 66.

O with the robe of honor, &c.

Though I by no means join issue with those who petulantly assert, that the clerical character is fast declining, yet I observe many indecencies and immoralities in the clergy, notwithstanding the mental illumination they so abundantly enjoy.

This unworthy conduct is principally owing to their disrespectful notions of the sacred order. They have not a becoming sense of their own dignity—a sufficient reverence for themselves, as Clergymen.

But this is partly to be attributed to the mean origin of many a priest amongst us. Sprung from plebeian parents, they are unable to divest themselves of their vulgarities, though regularly educated, per-

haps, at a grammar-school, and one of our English universities.

Among the evils of the present day I cannot but remark the foolish (and on some accounts dangerous) ambition that obtains among the lower orders, in regard to the education of their children. Classical learning hath now erected her temple in almost every village. No longer a goddess inaccessible to the vulgar, she throws open the door of instruction, and invites the profane multitude to taste of her *ψυχης λατρεϊον*—the ambrosia of the mind!—But to be plain. The grammar-schools, so generally instituted, attract the attention of our meanest mechanics, who send their children thither, to make them Scholars and Gentlemen!—And, as soon as their sons are ripe for the university, the poor parents become bankrupts to maintain them there; unless the plea of extraordinary abilities draw from some nabob a handsome douceur, which, together with a scholarship, may carry them to

their batchelor's degree. Thus invested, the promising young men apply for orders. They are admitted to the sacred function, and consecrated like the priests of Jeroboam, go out to preach the gospel. In this manner, the lowest of the people over-run the land, as the teachers of God's word, and by their meanesses and vulgarities bring obloquy on the most dignified of all professions. The sordid notions, adhesive to plebeian birth, are hardly to be discharged by the best education. It is certain, at least, that a country grammar-school and a provincial college are not the seminaries of generosity and elevated virtue. The son of a mechanic, who, though educated under a teacher of the classics, hath been inured to the low language and ideas and habits of his parent, and who, though matriculated as a child of *Alma Mater*, hath never, during his residence in college, been admitted into the company of gentlemen, cannot reasonably be expected to do honour to the gown, by the decorum or

respectability of his behaviour. If, however, he possess a tolerable share of good-sense, he will be so far conscious of his own superiority over the common rack-holders of his parish, as to prevent his cultivating their friendship, by a frequentation of their harvest-feasts or christenings, which are always attended with drunkenness and riot. It is owing to this gross familiarity with their parishioners, that clergymen so often lose the respect to which their order is entitled. The very people, whom their minister may temporally oblige by accepting an invitation to a harvest-feast, are seldom gratified on a view of his general character. He, who debases himself by coarse jocularities over the oft-replenished bowl, must dissipate all that awe which gives weight to admonition. The boon companion is seldom regarded as the pulpit orator. If, unfortunately, at the close of the festal meeting, the minister should want the assistance of his host, to convey him or conduct him home, he will, I suspect,

pronounce, with little energy, his next declamation on intemperance: and, should he really preach on such a subject, or preach without blushes (which I have actually known to be the case) he will discover the grossest stupidity or the most insolent effrontery. While our low-born priests are thus degrading themselves in the eyes of their parishes, it is no wonder that people of station should conceive a contemptible opinion of the clergy. It is a fact, that the possessor of the castle often excludes the parson from his table. And, indeed, a nobleman will scarcely admit to a familiar intercourse with his friends, those who deem themselves honored in the company of his steward, his butler, or his cook. Hence, then, that awful distance between the lord of the manor and the shy retreating vicar, though the latter ought surely to be raised above such despicable sheepishness, by the idea of a liberal education, a dignified profession, and a conduct corresponding with both.

There are other circumstances, indeed, that fully the cloth with a stain as deep and as disgraceful. We have fox-hunters and fashionists among the clergy. They, who drink or intrigue in style, enjoy, in spite of what is called the forbidding austerity—the sanctified moroseness of their order, the countenance and favor of the beau monde. And we have venal, time-serving parsons, who, for a living, do not scruple to bow down, in humble submission, to a pathic or a whore.

These are the sons of pleasure and of interest, for whom there is no possible excuse.

Whilst they dedicate their days and nights to voluptuousness, or gain preferment by servile adulation, they laugh at all the sacred duties; and, though they never visited the flock entrusted to their charge, enjoy the boasted privilege of stilling into a dead calm the agitations of conscience. Secure in their possessions, they spurn at the vulgar notions of residence, and place, perhaps, the strongest argument in its favor,

on a footing with that of an honest old preacher, who discoursing on the text—"Abraham begat Isaac"—took occasion hence to infer, that residence was of divine right—for, if Abraham had not resided, he could not have begot Isaac.

But it is a subject, perhaps, too serious for a ludicrous thought. To draw the attention of the clergy to their proper character was the only motive which induced me to make these cursory remarks. If I, in the slightest degree, succeed in this design, I shall have done more than can sometimes be effected by the most elaborate oratory.

Page 69.

Ah, what avails, fair artist, &c.

I have often wondered, that our nobility, for the sake of a little precarious influence, should almost universally submit to abandon the pleasures of retirement, at a season when nature is arrayed in all her

beauties. Blest as they are, in general, with extensive demesnes, it is still more surprising that they should be so utterly insensible to the charms of the country. For fashion's sake, indeed, they eagerly employ the best masters to create "the English garden"—to disturb the dryads of their venerable woods—to let in the distant landscape, and lay open their mansions to the blasts of the north.

But their mansions are laid open to rougher intruders than the winds: they might, otherwise, perhaps, have leisure to contemplate the amenities that are rising around them.

Having spent the greater part of the year in London, they make a hasty visit to the country, and, with no loss of time, convert their villas into inns, for the entertainment of the neighbouring boroughs. To support his interests in the borough-town, that unluckily happens to be situated within a mile or two of his seat, his lordship obligingly bows to the meanest

mechanic of the place, addresses every cobbler by his name, and "sows the streets with orient" smiles; carest for his condescending gentleness, and inly proud of his politic humility.

But it is not every borough that is ready to give him credit for the urbanity of disposition which he assumes; or to receive his favors with veneration or gratitude. Though he welcome to his castle every tradesman in possession of a vote, and at least on public days complacently adjust the ceremonies of precedence among trunk-making mayors or soap-boiling aldermen, yet he is often harraßt by the murmurs of discontent, and provoked to anger by the insults of impertinence. On pain, however, of losing his invaluable patronage, he must smother every sentiment that recoils at such degrading indignities, and dress his countenance with its wonted affability, though resentment rend his heart. Whilst he is cringing to the vile attorney who had managed, perhaps, the last election by means of the

dirtiest chicanery, my lady patroness dances attendance on the pettifogger's wife. Exposed to the influence of those who ape the manners of gentlewomen, and set themselves on a footing with her ladyship at the coterie, though obliged to dedicate their mornings to the service of the counter, the situation of such a personage, I think, is truly to be pitied: she finds her most flattering attentions misconstrued into artifice, and often listens, through sad necessity, to the petulant animadversions of females affecting independence; while her attachment to the interest of her lord prevents her from repelling the attack with the contempt and indignation it deserves.

This servile sort of patronage may gain the great man, perhaps, a little influence with the minister; but it is an influence which the nobility are seldom able to extend beyond the disposal of a few petty places in their boroughs. 'Tis in behalf of themselves alone, that my lord cringes to corporations. Struggling

with all the difficulties and disgraces of repeated elections, squandering away thousands among the unprincipled and the mercenary, to the defalcation of his rent-roll, and in opposition to the laws of his country, subjected to insults not to be resented, perplexed by importunities not to be repelled, stung by the ingratitude of some, and alarmed by the defection of others, he sees himself, at length, the envied patron of a few officers, perhaps, in the customs, for whom he hath the honor of procuring their respective appointments. Often, indeed, our nobility propose to themselves no particular ends in consequence of this humiliating connexion, whilst they wish not for new titles or new demesnes. The viscount, who aspires not to a higher title, and who possesses an independent fortune that ought to secure to him an independent spirit, is pursuing a phantom which he is unable to define, while he involves himself in the business of his boroughs. Possibly his boroughs descended to him with his estate:

and it is the phantom of hereditary honor. But to this airy nothing what does he sacrifice?—Perhaps, a beautiful villa, and his best country-connexions into the bargain.

Thus uncomfortably he spends his hours in the country, while his happiest election-schemes are embittered by a variety of grievances and vexations: the consequence of which is, that he allots a very small portion of his time to the feat of his forefathers. If he do not affect a taste, his grounds, instead of being laid out by the designer, discover, probably, every mark of desolation—his walks and lawns rankly vegetating with weeds—his groves, in one part, rifled by the winds, in another, grown into an impenetrable thicket. If, indeed, the mania for improvement seize him, he may have the satisfaction of seeing, as it were, a new Eden created without any co-operation of his own; since there is little chance of his intruding upon the artist he employs amidst the execution of the

projected work. In either case, he has no leisure to contemplate his grounds, as falling into ruin, or as fashioned into beauty. It is true, he has chosen the finest season in the year, for a visit to his mansion. But while he suffers it to be haunted by such beings as must inevitably frighten away every image of rural tranquillity, 'tis impossible that he can relish the pleasures of the season. The sweet summer evenings pass by unheeded, though they stream through his vistas the richest light—though they tincture his lawn with colours the most beautiful—though they deepen his woods and burnish his waterfalls. Alas! his table is begirt with the vulgarest people in the neighbourhood: and he “lets the sun go down” upon intemperance and riot. The purest delights are thus resigned for dissatisfaction, solicitude and shame.

It is not, however, the deprivation of every rural enjoyment that he has solely to regret. His connexion with the country-gentlemen, who had always a respect

for his family, is considerably weakened or dissolved. There is sometimes, indeed, on his table the calipash or calipee, of which they are hospitably welcomed to partake. But being men of education, they like not to fall in with the low people, whom he daily entertains. Had he pursued a different line of conduct, he might have boasted an intercourse with polished minds, such as heighten the pleasures of society, and give a relish to every elegant enjoyment. However fine the disposition of his wood or water, the taste of mercers and grocers (though members of a corporate body) can hardly be judged equal to the task of appreciating its beauties. The worthies of the borough, indeed, may express wonder at the scene: but the stare and the language of ignorance, only excite contempt. From the conversation of those, whose applauses might raise in his bosom the glow of complacency, our unfortunate patron hath excluded himself. And his hours move heavily along; while, at every pause of reflexion,

he regrets the sacrifice of convivial elegance, to vulgar feasting, of politeness and decorum, to obsequiousness or insolence, and of approving friendship to stupid admiration.

Page 71.

Where is the sigh, the kind-relieving tear?

The Sonnet, to which I refer, was written, several years ago, in town, when I not only paid particular attention to the drama, but fancied that I had succeeded in *marking the effects of tragedy on the mind at the different seasons of life*. I will endeavour to recollect my idea of these effects, and retrace, if possible, my feelings.

A short time before my excursion to London, I had been reading with a friend that noble tragedy of Lillo, "The Fatal Curiosity." Luckily it was performed when I was in town.

Such an opportunity of seeing a play, whose merits I so enthusiastically espoused, was eagerly embraced : and indeed, it truly answered my expectations, though the performers were extremely deficient in feeling and the powers of elocution. Were I to describe the effects it produced with the pathos of a Sterne, or to exclaim, in the strong expression of Collins :

The maids and matrons on * his awful voice

Silent and pale in wild amazement hung—

I should not exaggerate. As a proof of the wonderful effects of this singular tragedy, replete with the direst horror, the last part of it, where the wife as it were presides over the murder of her own son, and invokes assistance to enable her husband to perpetrate the deed, is entirely omitted—the audience having cried out, on the first night of its representation, “ that it was “ too much, that it was too deep, and not to be “ borne”—This singular fact makes me readily believe

* Lillo's.

the account transmitted to us of the Greek tragedian, who composed a tragedy so excessively deep, that the state thought fit to lay a severe fine upon him. Even the night when I was present, a lady fainted in my arms at the winding-up of the catastrophe! Such were the effects of a performance, which hath stood the test of the severest criticism, and which Harris hath justly considered as a perfect piece.

I made it particularly a point while I was in town to attend Mrs. Siddons,—a truly dramatic phenomenon that repaired the loss which the theatre had sustained within the last ten years from the departure of its brightest ornaments. Her style of playing was neither allied to the languor of Miss Young, nor the turbulence of Mrs. Yates. Propriety of declamation, expression strongly delineated in her countenance, and action always graceful, compose the great outline of her manners.

It is from these three principles, that she has the power of drawing tears from a multitude made up of all ranks of people from the king to the cobbler. It is from these three principles, so finely united and so finely varied, that she has the art not only of producing pity and terror, but of engaging our attention so closely to her story as to beguile us of our reflexion, and to persuade us "unwittingly," that she is the very identical object that suffers the various distresses presented only to our imagination. In *Jane Shore* she pains the heart beyond conception, and obliges us by the turn she gives to the character to consider *Jane Shore herself* as an object of admiration. As the catastrophe advances, she improves likewise in her playing, till humanity, wrought up to the highest point it is able to support, is obliged to find relief by a flood of tears.

To a contemplative turn of mind, I know not any thing which conciliates love for the species more than

observing in them an aptitude to receive the impressions even of fictitious woe.

I was really pleased with the universal dejection. It taught me to revere my countrymen as men not yet divested of their noblest characteristic. It taught me to look up to them as the patrons of adversity—the participators of the accumulated distress of fallen virtue. And while I indulged myself in these feelings, I received an additional degree of pleasure on recollecting that I myself was one of them, and that my beating heart told me I had a claim to the same eulogium.

If it were possible, however, to remain an unconcerned spectator, it would be curious enough to observe the little endeavours the audience made use of to suppress the effects of nature; as if ashamed of exhibiting themselves as creatures possessed of pity and benevolence. I myself was foolish enough to sit down and hide my face in my hand, because I thought the

ladies I accompanied might probably accuse me of weakness and effeminacy. To the honor of his Majesty, I observed him weeping, at the tale of fictitious woe, like a child: I would not wish to have any other proof of the goodness of his heart.

As soon as the tragedy is over, I generally quit the theatre; for I cannot say that I am a friend to the received opinion that the effects of tragedy should be obliterated by those of farce.—I recollect, when I read *Clarissa Harlowe* (the finest work of the pathetic I ever read) the *subsequent* sensations were much more acceptable to the soul than the *present*: they were softer; and meliorated like the tender colours of an evening-cloud, they seemed to recede with the same degree of gentleness. It is thus with tragedy, which differs only in its constituent, not in its essential parts, from a novel, or an epic poem. And, therefore, if I wish to enjoy my own feelings, I

leave the impertinences of farce to be relished by those who prefer the ludicrous to the beautiful.

Nor do I much regard the opera above a farce. It is true I was pleased with the *taste* of Pacherotti—but with his taste only. Pacherotti, to me appeared a singer, who owed his reputation rather to caprice and fashion than to any inherent power of entertaining—His person ungraceful and ridiculous, his action not only outrè, but absolutely ridiculous, and his voice having more the tone of art than of nature. Taste he certainly possessed : but taste, at the expence of person, action, and voice, is surely no foundation on which to build a character. Such were my sentiments and feelings a few years ago : but they were the sentiments and feelings of youth. The feelings of young people are not only lively and quick, but have much more of pleasure than of pain in them. And they are pleasurable sensations chiefly that rest upon the mind, however deep or pathetic the representation might have been.

It is not so with those who are advanced in life. Interested ideas, unknown to the young, but insensibly acquired with increasing years, never fail to cool the ardency of fancy and passion : and the disappointments and vexations unavoidable in life, must have destroyed the fine edge of delicate sensibility. Their feelings therefore are less quick and lively. They have at the time more pain than pleasure, if the tragedy be deep. It was owing to this, that they could not bear Lillo. Had the audience, at the first representation of Lillo, been composed of very young people, I much question whether they would have wished to have it curtailed*.

* In Julia de Roubigné the remembrance of Belville (the old family-seat) affects Julia with sensations very different from those of her father. " I felt (says Julia) the full force of the description ;
" but *to me it was not painful*. It is not on hearts that yield the
" soonest, that sorrow has the most powerful effects : it was but
" giving way to a shower of tears ; and I could think of Belville
" with pleasure, even in the possession of another. They may cut
" its trees, Maria, and alter its walks, but cannot so deface it as
" to leave no traces for the memory of your Julia. Methinks I
" should hate to have been born in a town. When I say my
" native brook, or my native hill, I talk of friends of whom the

This impresson of pain predominant over pleasure, continues longer, also, upon the minds of middle-aged people, after the representation is past. On this account they have recourse to the farce for relief.

And, indeed, we always find, from the same principle, that in proportion as we grow older, we prefer works of humour to works of pathos. In proportion as we lose the dear, the amiable sensibilities of youth, we disrelish the productions that appeal to them.

We throw aside our Richardsons, and take up our Fieldings and our Smollets.

" remembrance warms my heart. To me, even to me, who have
 " lost their acquaintance, there is something delightful in the melancholy reflection of their beauties : and here, I often wander
 " out to the top of a little broom-covered knoll, merely to look
 " towards the quarter where Belville is situated.

" *It is otherwise with my father.* On Le Blanc's recital he has
 " brooded these three days. The effect it had on him is still visible
 " in his countenance, and but an hour ago, while my mother and
 " I were talking of some other subject, in which he was joining by
 " monosyllables, he said, all at once, that he had some thoughts
 " of sending to the marquiss for his roan horse again, since he did
 " not chuse to keep him properly." Vol. i, p. 15, 16, 17.

With very aged people, indeed, the feelings approximate to those of youth, though they are much less acute, and more transitory.

But, in the mixture of pleasure and pain, the old have more of the former; because, in the recollection of the past, they endeavour to bring together every scattered ray of enjoyment, whilst they suffer the traces of pain to vanish away. Besides, they have a propensity to contemplate the past; and, thinking the past better than the present, they always look on it with complacency. Hence they are predisposed to feel more pleasure than pain. This predisposition is a happy circumstance for old people, who, as they are wonderfully assisted by memory in recalling very distant scenes, would have their former griefs renewed, and their wounds opened afresh, were they inclined to see pain in all its harshness, and not mellowed amidst the soft tints of pleasure and joy.

Old people, therefore, more inclined to pleasureable than painful emotions, have no objection to scenes of imaginary distress. Lillo would not have been too terrible for them; since the strokes of horror would not have sunk deep into their souls, nor the impressions of such strokes have long remained there.

These seem to be the natural progressions of feeling in the mind through each stage of life. And it is always found, that the less commerce we have with the dissipated, or the mercenary part of the world, the longer we retain our youthful feelings.

The young are not yet engaged, and the old are beginning to be disengaged from the world. The middle aged, only, are busy in its concerns. I would, therefore, advise the middle-aged to attend the representations of tragedy as frequently as they can. The exhibition of distress, abstracted from all worldly concerns, would soften their hearts; that resisted, perhaps, the complaints of real sorrow, from an appre-

hension of intruding melancholy. Coming from a tragedy, with the deep impression of sorrow on their minds, they would be disposed to listen to the unfortunate. This sensation, in truth, often repeated, would help them to retain their youthful sensibilities to a later period than usual, which would produce a striking effect on their general morality. The tragic poet is surely one of the best friends to the interests of virtue.

Page 74.

So shall the scholar's and the soldier's bays.

The most distinguished characters among the Greeks and Romans, were those who intermixed their *sedentary studies* with *active employments*, either in a civil or in a military capacity. When we recollect the names of Eschylus, Thucydides, Xenophon, or Cæsar, we see the laurels of the poet or the historian interwoven with those of the warrior, or the statesman. And

places were set apart, both at Athens and at Rome, where literary men assembled to enjoy the pleasures of *conversation*. It seems to have been the boast of some of the Roman literati, that they were able to exercise their bodies and minds at the same instant. So avaricious were they of their time, that they used to compose a poem, or an essay, in the midst of a journey. But I cannot say that I much approve the practice. He who is engaged, on the road, in writing a poem, can hardly attend to the prospects around him. Nor do I think that the body is exercised to any purpose, unless the labours of the mind be suspended. It is, also, doubtful, whether even a Roman could compose with the same rapidity of thought, or felicity of combination amidst the unavoidable interruptions of travel, as in the retirement of his villa, surrounded by the still scenery of groves and vineyards. There was yet a more palpable absurdity in attempting to unite the studies of the closet with the sports of the

field. To mingle in the same cup the libations to Minerva and Diana, was impertinent and vain : it was a sacrifice slighting to both. The studious Roman, however, who affected the sportsman, would take his tablets with him into the woods, and having disposed his nets, for the capture of the wild boar, recline in a thicket at a little distance, with his pencil instead of his spear. In this situation, he ran a greater risk, I should conceive, of being surprized himself, than the beasts for which he had laid his snares.

Yet the Romans, in general, very judiciously tempered their serious studies with lighter amusements. In the epistles of Pliny we have a pleasing description of the diversified pursuits of *Spurinna* *. This, however, was at his country villa ; when, advanced in years, he had retired from public business. Whilst in office, his employments, as a statesman, were, perhaps, a sufficient relaxation of his studies, and therefore pre-

* See Melmoth's Pliny, vol. i. p. 126.

cluded the necessity of voluntary exercise. The voluminous compositions of the elder Pliny, engaged as he constantly was in the politics of his country, are truly astonishing : but he owed all to the regular distribution of his time †.

The English student is little disposed to diversify his hours by a proper attention to *exercise* or *conversation*. Rural diversions are uncongenial with his nature. He pursues his game, perhaps, in theory ; preferring a deputation from the Muse to sport in the poetic regions, to any real qualification for hunting or shooting, the barbarity of which he may probably expose in the satirical effusion, or mourn in melting elegy. If the student be actually seen in the field, we are only reminded of “ the silent gentleman.” Nor, on observing him in conversation, is this *Addisonian* trait very distant from our thoughts. The English author,

† For the manner in which Pliny spent his time, when in town, see Melmoth's Pliny, vol. I. p. 137.

little resembling either the ancient Roman, or the modern Italian, is commonly remarked for his taciturnity. Having evaporated his spirit in composition, he is a *caput mortuum* in the conversazioni. Satisfied with his private studies, he sees not the necessity of exerting himself in the social circle; nor feels his complacency disturbed, though he lose every opportunity of contributing his share to the amusement of the company. But other people are not conscious of his literary performances. He may have left an epic poem behind him on his desk, and have joined the company with the triumphant idea of having just completed his last book, after the labour of years. But, perhaps, he finds no kindred soul to whom he may communicate his transports. If his transports, indeed, urge him to tell his heroic achievements, he vainly looks round for applause. Not a person in the company discovers the slightest sense of his dignity: piqued and mortified, he, of course, sits out the tedious hours

in silence. To such causes is owing the incommuni-
cative temper of our literary men : and it is observ-
able, that authors are treated with much less respect
in the mixed companies of the English, than in those
of the French or Italian. We have some men of a
literary turn, indeed, who take a part, like a Spurianna
or a Pliny, in the political and military transactions of
their country. We have a Burgoyne*, whose active
and versatile genius is able to carry him, though
not, indeed, with equal lustre, from the senate to the
camp, from the camp to the library, from the library
to the polished circle. It is but justice to acknowledge,
that he blends with the intrepidity of a soldier, the
talents of an author, and the spirit of a gentleman.
We have lately seen a Gibbon * retiring from his nu-
merous connexions to the seclusion of Laufanne, and
composing his " Decline and Fall of the Roman Em-
pire " in that romantic solitude. It was on the same

* The above was written while Burgoyne was yet living—and
Gibbon too !

sequestered spot, that Dr. Gillies composed his history of Greece. This agreeable diversification of a literary life, must be highly conducive to the interests of learning. Nothing is more necessary to the success of our learned labours, than a regular attention to bodily exercise: and he, who thinks intensely, requires frequent relaxation. The studies of the most lively and vigorous mind grow languid, unless occasionally intermitted. The sedentary man, after the recreation of a morning ride, enjoys his books with a keener relish: he composes with double alacrity: his conceptions are clear; his expressions rich and flowing. By allotting a few hours in the day to exercise, he gains time instead of losing it; since the quicker his ideas, the more rapidly he must write. With regard to the communication of our sentiments in society, I would recommend general conversation, as greatly contributing to enliven the spirits. The discourse of promiscuous company always runs on the most trifling topics. From that

principle of politeness which sets a wise man and a :
upon a footing, lest the feelings of the latter should
wounded by an invidious comparison, it is a rule in
all our social circles, to discountenance every effort at
discussion that may betray ignorance or argue inge-
nuity. This is, undoubtedly, too high a compliment
to silly and superficial people. But learned men will
never be permitted to dictate the fashions, since they
are out-numbered by the illiterate : and the majority
in every community must prevail. If, then, they fre-
quent the drawing-room, let them discard their lite-
rary ideas at the door, and learn to be a little flexible
and accommodating. It is a pliancy, that, as I have
already hinted, may turn out to their advantage. To
recount the petty transactions of the neighbourhood,
requires no stretch of thought. To particularize the
minutiae of a lady's dress, is equally unconnected with
the cogitative faculties. Yet this harmless trifling
may amuse an author's thoughts ; dispel the cloud of
melancholy too often generated by close application,

and possibly give ease and fluency to his language. Let it not, however, be supposed, that I would sanction these futile conversations. Like novels, they may pleasingly relax the minds of studious men; but they emasculate—they paralyze the uninformed. In the mean time I would advise the student to cultivate, with sedulous attention, the acquaintance of his brethren. The sum of real knowledge to be gained by such intercourse it is impossible to calculate. Congenial minds elicit those latent sparks of genius which would, otherwise, have never been displayed. They get rid of prejudices and singular modes of thinking, by communication. We pursue our favorite train of thought more closely, from the suggestions of others. We are taught to think deeply, justly and liberally, by a reciprocal interchange of sentiments. We find our memories vastly assisted by conversation, in the recollection of historical incidents. When we differ in opinion from another, we draw out all our powers of argumentation to maintain our point; though they would

otherwise have been enfeebled for want of exertion. Even a little irritation in an argument may be favourable to wit and fancy. In retirement, wit has little room for displaying itself: the best strokes of wit generally proceed from two minds in collision. A brilliant thought is started, which, incomplete in itself, is instantaneously and happily finished by the coincident idea of another mind. The advantage, in short, of such interviews, is hardly exceeded by that of reading. Society dispels obscurity, and banishes singularity from our writings. The whimsical hypothesis is commonly formed in the chambers of the recluse.

Let me recommend it, therefore, to studious men, to shift the scene as frequently as they can, from the study to the field: nor let them neglect the trifling of the tea-table, the politics of the coffee-room, or the more important communications of the literary society.

THE END.



P. Colburn

